

# stating our policy

U-G-33A

**In one word—Responsive**

KP 3858



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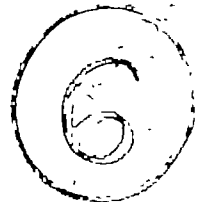
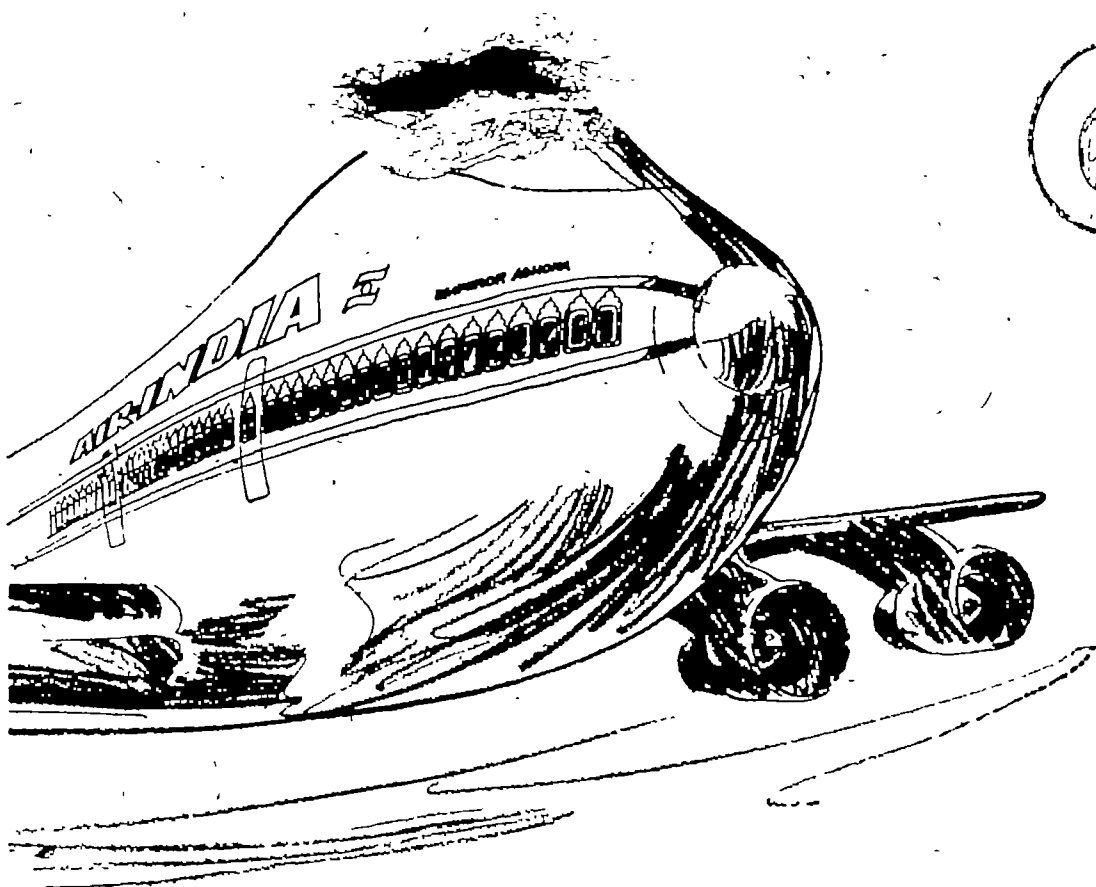
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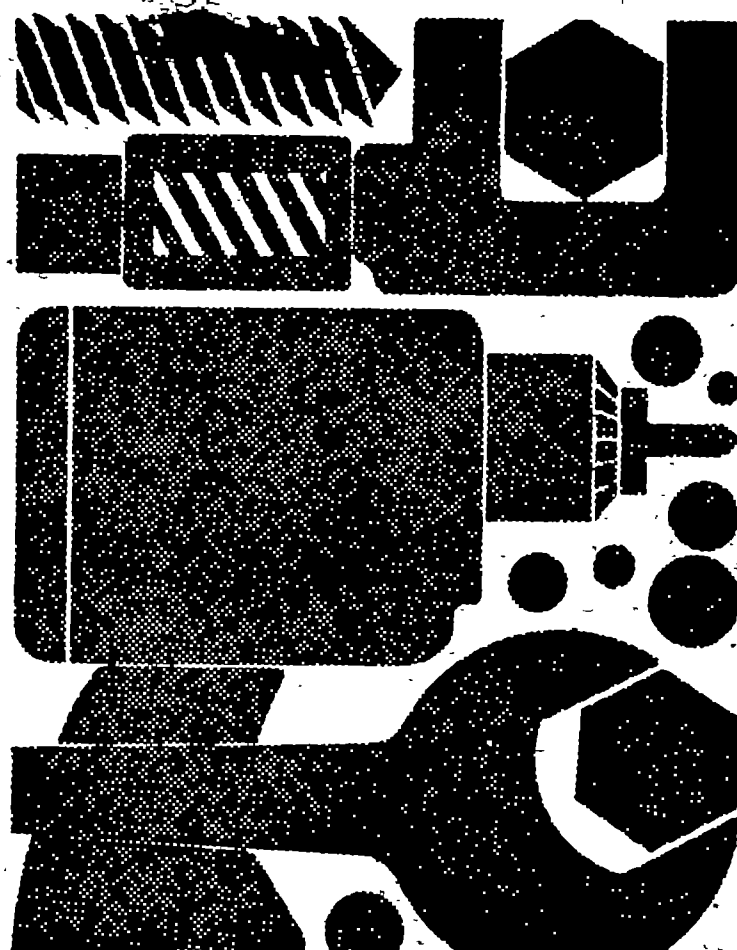


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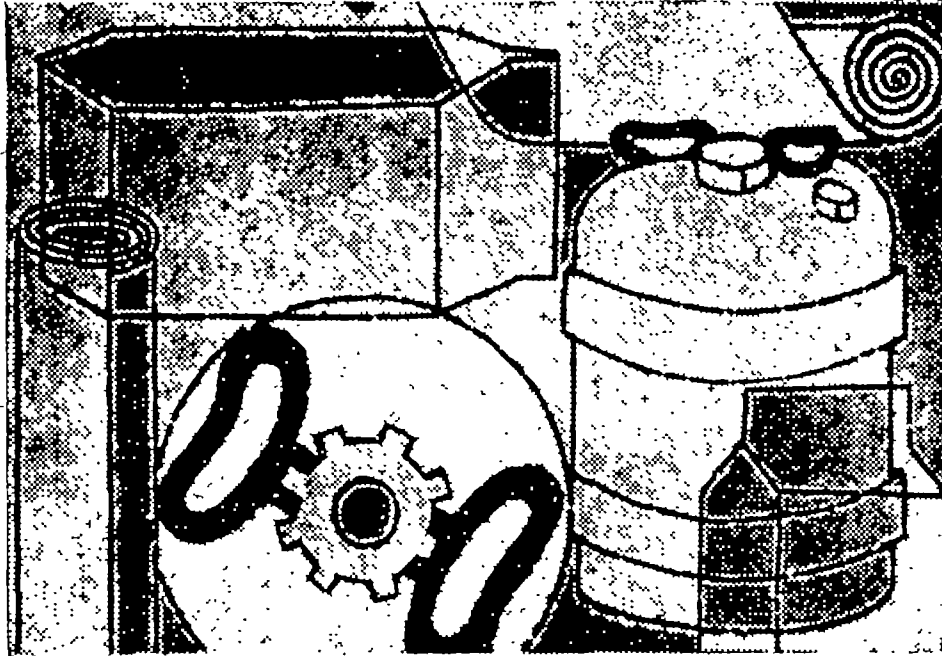
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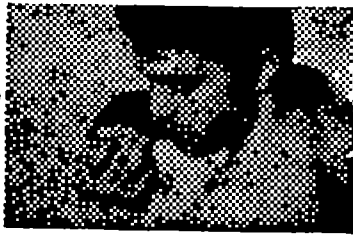
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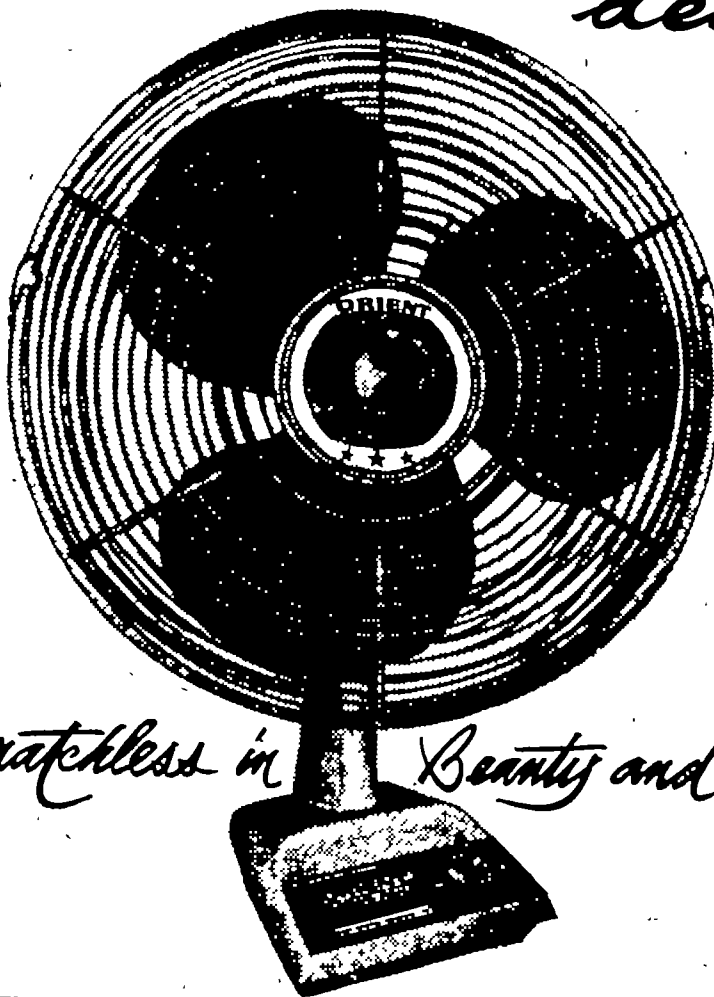
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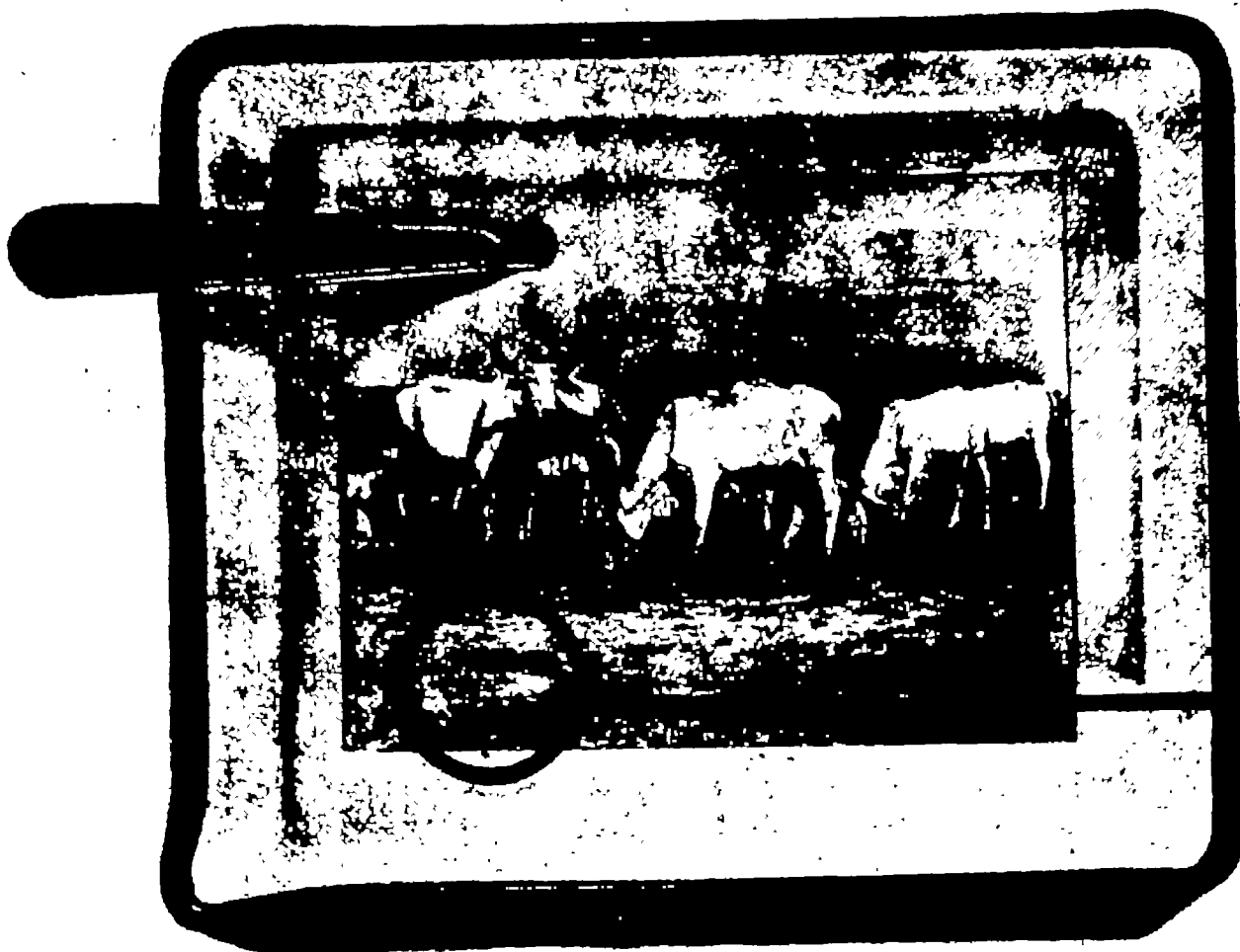


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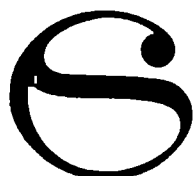
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Inserted in the public interest by the Protein Foods Association of India

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## EXT MONTH : ECONOMIC AGENDA

# 142

## BANGLA DESH

a nation in  
the making for  
twenty five years

documentary evidence

### THE PROBLEM

Posed by **Sisir Gupta**, Professor  
of Diplomacy, Jawaharlal Nehru  
University

### THE GENESIS OF PAKISTAN

From Iqbal to Jinnah

### JINNAH'S METAMORPHOSIS

From Secularism to Islamic  
Ideology

### CONFRONTATION BEGINS

The 1954 elections and after

### MILITARY RULE

Ayub on East Bengal and  
Bhutto on foreign policy

### TOWARDS ELECTIONS

The promise of democracy

### ELECTIONS AND AFTER

The demands of East  
Pakistan

### BANGLA DESH'S INDEPENDENCE

The formation of the new State

### INDIAN POLICY

The Prime Minister's Statements

### STATISTICAL APPENDIX

Courtesy, Indian Institute of Public Opinion

### DOCUMENTATION

Prepared by **Baladas Ghoshal**

### COVER

Designed by **Dilip Chowdhury**

# The problem

THE struggle of Bangla Desh to emerge as a sovereign independent nation marks the culmination of a long process of its disenchantment with the State of Pakistan. While the roots of East Bengali nationalism could be found in the cultural autonomy of that part of the sub-continent, the pace of growth of national feelings and aspirations of the people of Bangla Desh was hastened by the political and economic developments in Pakistan. In fact, it was in response to the colonial policies pursued by the Central Government of Pakistan that the dormant nationalism of East Bengal had begun to assert itself.

Yet, it is too easy to imagine that the elite of West Pakistan was uniquely incapable of handling the problems of unity and unification of one of the new States of the world. The reality is that it is not the failings of the ruling elite of Pakistan alone but the abnormalities of the Pakistan State itself which must explain the long drawn out malaise of that country. The failure of the Pakistani elite has not been so much in the management of the State they created but in the conception of a State which was virtually unmanageable. Even the most astute and sensitive leadership could have found it difficult if not impossible to build a nation out of Pakistan.

The idea of a Muslim nationhood was unreal and archaic—a product of the policies pursued by the imperial power for more than a century of its rule over this vast region. The crux of British policy was not merely 'divide and rule' as it is commonly understood; it was 'divide the subjects and unite the empire' which was the underlying spirit of British attitudes to political and constitutional reforms in India. The imperial authority was fundamentally interested in maintaining the unity of the Indian empire while dividing its subjects. Hence, the vertical divisions of Indian society, like caste and religious differences, were emphasised while the other divisive forces like regional and linguistic

loyalties were carefully relegated to the background.

The idea was to divide every village of India into two vertically organised political groupings so that both Hindu and Muslim communalism could strengthen the integrity of the empire while weakening the unity of its peoples. Hence, the two fantasies of *Akhand Bharat* on the one hand and a united Indo-Muslim nationhood on the other. So long as these political slogans were only meant to pluralise Indian society, their utter irrelevance in the modern age remained hidden. Once Pakistan was created on the basis of such an artificial and unviable definition of nationhood, it faced insoluble problems of defining a Pakistani identity.

Curiously, the original votaries of the idea of division of India were thinking in terms of a viable territorial nationalism of the peoples of the north-western areas of this sub-continent. The homeland that Iqbal sought for the Muslims of north-western India would be not only Muslim but also north-western. Such an idea, based on our horizontal division of Indian society, could have little appeal to a party like the All-India Muslim League which thrived on the fantasies of Indo-Muslim unity. The Muslim League in fact was very largely the party of the Muslims of the Muslim minority areas and hence the separation of north-western India from the rest of the empire would have meant but little to them.

After a decade, Jinnah redefined Pakistan to mean a homeland for all Indian Muslims and the slogan began to symbolise the aspirations of nearly a hundred million peoples spread over the whole of India for some kind of a separate nationhood. Behind this concept was the self-image of the Muslim elite—the image of being equal if not superior to the brute majority of non-Muslims in the sub-continent. The Muslim League found it difficult to accept the idea that

the Muslims of India were a minority and that it was the task of the party to articulate the demands of this minority for a proper share of rights and authority in the Indian State. The very term 'minority' pre-determined the status of the Indian Muslims. However generous the concessions to a minority, it would by definition be unequal to the majority. Hence the concept of two nations. One nation could be smaller than another in size but nothing could pre-determine its status vis-a-vis a bigger nation.

The two-nation theory was evolved at a time when the ideal of sovereign independent statehood for the two nations appeared too remote to necessitate any serious thought regarding the economic and political viability of the two nations. It was more an exercise in improving the bargaining capacity of the Muslim League than in creating two separate States in the sub-continent. In fact, even Sir Syed Ahmed had talked of two nations; the idea of two States would not have occurred in his mind at that time.

How and why the All-India Muslim League adopted the Pakistan Resolution in 1940 is itself a significant question which future historians alone will be able to answer. Was it because the Muslim League had foreseen that the war would give an impetus to rapid constitutional progress in India and that the imperial system would undergo many changes, irrespective of who won the war? Could it be that the slogan of Pakistan had something to do with the advances of the German army in the Middle East and the growth of pro-German tendencies in countries like Iran and Iraq? Was the attempt primarily to insulate the strategically vital north-western regions of India from the political pulls and pressures generated by the freedom movement in the sub-continent?

Whatever be one's answers to these questions, it is indeed surprising how vague and ambiguous

the Lahore Resolution was as to what Pakistan would ultimately be. Clearly, there was no concept at this stage of having a united State of Pakistan. All that was said was that the Muslims of India needed independent Muslim majority States to feel safe and secure in the sub-continent.

However vague the Lahore Resolution, it was clearly based on the concept of Indo-Muslim nationhood and very different from what Iqbal had asked for in 1930. The negativism of the Muslim League throughout the political and constitutional negotiations between British authority on the one hand and Indian parties on the other was manifest in the persistent refusal of the leaders of the Muslim League to spell out what Pakistan would mean. Nor was there any attempt to evolve a set of social and economic goals for the State of Pakistan.

It is not impossible that behind this unwillingness and inability to think of the problems of Pakistan was an abiding hope that a synthesis between the ideas of the Congress and the Muslim League would be found in a loose confederal arrangement for the sub-continent. It is interesting to recall that the Muslim League had promptly accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946 to divide India into zones and federate the various groups of provinces into a single State. With two Muslim majority groups and a third group of princely India to balance the weight of the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League would be able to ensure the existence of a central structure in the sub-continent in which the Muslims of the Muslim minority areas would draw upon all these external sources of sympathy and sustenance to improve their lot.

Jinnah was right in his belief that the concept of Indo-Muslim nationhood would have relevance only if the concept of India was not totally undermined. It is only as a reflection of Muslim

anxieties in an undivided India that the Indo-Muslim consciousness can be sustained. Fortunately or unfortunately, this particular scheme of creating an ineffective central authority in a loosely confederated India fell through. Politics in the sub-continent had gone to the streets of the cities and villages and neither the leaders of the Congress nor those of the Muslim League had either the courage or the necessary initiative to impart rationality into the process of transfer of power. Thus, an independent Pakistan with the majority of its population living one thousand miles away from the seat of power and authority came into being. The cream of the Indo-Muslim elite migrated to the western wing of Pakistan, leaving millions of their followers behind to suffer the consequences of the two-nation theory.

There were three sets of artificialities in the Pakistan that came into being in 1947. It was geographically a unique and absurd State. Its national identity was thin and vulnerable. Its leadership was alien to the inhabitants of the territory which was now called Pakistan. Paradoxically it is the third artificiality which sustained the unity of Pakistan for some time. The Hindustani elite which had taken over the reins of the Government of Pakistan not only shared the fantasies of Indo-Muslim unity but also found in it the only method of perpetuating their authority over the new State where they were aliens.

It is in these initial years that the critical guidelines of the State ideology of Pakistan were laid down by the migrant elite from India. Utterly secular in his personal life and very western in his values, Jinnah had first wanted to create a modern State in Pakistan where non-religious and territorial nationalism would provide a sense of identity to its peoples. The realities, however, were soon to overwhelm him and the definition of the ideology and identity of Pakistan that was provided during his historic visit to Dacca in 1948 was a negation of the principles he had himself enunciated in his inaugural address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11 August, 1947.

The Islamic basis of Pakistani nationhood was formally written down when the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan adopted an Objectives Resolution in March 1949. Jinnah had passed away a year earlier and the burden of sustaining the authority of the immigrant elite had fallen on Liaquat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister. As the pressures for the removal of this leadership and its replacement by an indigenous elite began to grow, Liaquat Ali's insistence on Islamic identity became louder. In 1950 he discovered the Rawalpindi conspiracy—a plot allegedly hatched by a group of army officers to overthrow his regime. A year later, it was in Rawalpindi itself that the Prime Minister was

assassinated. There has been a great deal of suspicion within Pakistan as to who were behind this assassination plot and some people believed that a Punjabi clique in the bureaucracy was very much involved in the planning and implementation of this conspiracy.

The murder of Liaquat Ali Khan was preceded by an attempt on his part to emphasise the anti-Indian aspect of Pakistani identity. The new State had involved itself in a conflict with India on the morrow of its freedom and instead of seeking to devise ways and means of living in peace and co-operation with India, the leaders of Pakistan had begun to utilise the conflicting relationship with this country as an additional layer of a new Pakistani identity. As crisis began to overwhelm Liaquat Ali Khan, he had raised a clenched fist as the symbol of his country's attitude to India. This did not save him from extinction but provided the subsequent leaders of Pakistan with an alternative to a positive Islamic sense of belonging which they in any case would have been unable to manipulate.

The end of Liaquat Ali Khan marked the end of one of the three sets of artificialities mentioned above. Leadership gradually began to pass into the hands of the sons of the soil and the all-India elite yielded place to a new Pakistani elite. Yet, so obvious was the linkage between the three sets of artificialities that the end of one only exacerbated the problems created by the other two. It also created the additional and in fact the crucial problem of distribution of power and authority among the various groups of people who inhabited Pakistan.

The attack on the alien leadership came from the Punjab and although the politicians of the Punjab were utilised in full measure as the apparent vanguard of this struggle, the real forces who were trying to be ascendant were the army and the bureaucracy. Thus the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan also marked the beginning of the emergence of the military bureaucratic elite as the dominant elements in the power structure of Pakistan.

The two developments, namely, the ascendancy of the Punjab and the ascendancy of the military bureaucratic elite, were interlinked. So long as an elite equidistant both from Bengal and Punjab ruled Pakistan, the inherent conflict between these two major nationalities never came out in the open. Once this artificial leadership was removed from authority, the question of distribution of power as between Bengal on the one hand and Punjab on the other became acute and insoluble.

Because of the nature of the elites of the two nationalities and because of the marked differences in their positions within the Pakistani

States the method that East Bengal chose in order to assert its rights was the method of democratic change. With over 55 per cent of the country's population, the trump card of East Bengal was parliamentary democracy. Punjab on the other hand had the twin problem of integrating West Pakistan under its dominance and of creating a power structure for the whole of Pakistan in which East Bengal would not be able to take advantage of its numbers to end that particular structure.

From this moment onwards, the lines of the confrontation were drawn. East Bengal was more and more to fall back on democracy to assert its position whereas its adversaries were more and more to fall back on an authoritarian pattern of government to uphold theirs. By 1964 the ground had been prepared for an open conflict. In the Central Government of Pakistan, the authority of the military bureaucratic elite was very markedly established; in East Bengal an election resulted in the overwhelming victory of popular forces as represented by the Awami League and the Krishak Shramik Party.

The United Front in East Bengal succeeded in eliminating the Muslim League from the politics of the region and was poised for a massive effort to change the scheme of things in Pakistan. The dominant elite in Karachi, however, had already driven the thin end of the authoritarian wedge into the Pakistani democratic structure (when Ghulam Mohammad arbitrarily dismissed Prime Minister Nazimuddin in 1953).

The first confrontation, however, ended in a clear victory of the central authority in Pakistan. The leaders of East Bengal were charged with treason and thrown out of power without much ceremony. How and why this was possible is again an interesting historical question. It is clear, however, that even if the forces of democracy and authoritarianism were evenly balanced in Pakistan, external aid and assistance had by now been made available to the antidemocratic forces in order to tilt the balance in their favour.

In fact, the crucial role played by American military aid in bringing about the end of the first democratic experiment in East Bengal was obvious to all students of Pakistani politics. By providing arms aid to the Government of Pakistan, the United States had created conditions for the over-throw of democracy in that country. In fact, all the three critical figures in the military bureaucratic complex—Ghulam Mohammad, Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan—were involved in the negotiations with Washington. The point was not missed by the political parties of East Bengal who had in their 1964 manifesto totally rejected the foreign policy of alliance with the West and asked for

non-alignment. It was also of symbolic importance that when the Government of East Bengal was summarily dismissed, the man sent to Dacca as Governor was Iskander Mirza.

For over four years, the history of Pakistan was the history of the gradual decline of democratic institutions. The formal take-over of power by the military came in October 1958. In this period, the crisis of identity in Pakistan became sharper and the dependence on hostility towards India for resolving this crisis became greater. Successive Prime Ministers of Pakistan—there were five in four years—played upon the anti-Indian theme in order to meet the uncontrollable challenges they faced.

The imposition of Martial Law and the installation of a military dictatorship under President Ayub Khan meant the eclipse of East Bengal's hopes of redressal of its grievances and the acceleration of the Central Government's efforts to build up a colonial relationship with East Bengal. In the three-tier power structure that Ayub built, the army and the bureaucracy held the dominant positions. It was only a minor and insignificant role that was allotted to party politics when a constitution was introduced in 1962; the system of basic democracies did not fundamentally alter the authoritarian pattern introduced in 1958 by President Ayub Khan.

From the point of view of the people of East Bengal, these developments were totally retrograde. In neither the army nor the bureaucracy was East Bengal properly represented. In fact, with 55 per cent of the population they had less than 10 per cent of the share in the armed forces. Equally unfavourable was their position in the upper echelons of the bureaucracy. Such politics as was permitted by President Ayub Khan was utterly inadequate to challenge the military bureaucratic elite. In fact, the basic democracies were intended to legitimise the authoritarian system.

The self-confidence of the new power elite in Islamabad (one of the first acts of Ayub Khan was to shift the capital from Karachi to Islamabad, thus institutionalising the shift of focus of authority within Pakistani society) prevented any genuine attempt on its part to come to terms with the demands and aspirations of the people of East Bengal. President Ayub Khan himself carried an image of the Bengali which was bound to make him indifferent towards the people of that wing. He had felt amused as early as 1948 by the way political agitators in East Bengal seemed to lose their courage in face of the appearance of an army officer like him on the scene. He was also deeply convinced that the gap between East Bengal and West Pakistan was largely a question of the gap between the abilities of the peoples in the two

wings. Disparity to him was the result of the unequal capabilities of the peoples.

For almost a decade, the suppressed fury of the people of East Bengal could find no expression in either political agitation or social upheaval. The democratic forces of East Bengal were kept under constant check and even such respected figures as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were tried and imprisoned on charges of treason. In fact, it is interesting that all the three great names of East Bengali public life were at one time or the other accused of treason by the Central Government—Suhrawardy in 1948, Fazlul Huq in 1954 and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1966.

Such wanton charges only convinced the people of East Bengal that nothing short of a total transformation of the bases of the Pakistani State would be adequate for redressal of their grievances. To the extent that anti-Indianism was an integral part of the method of colonial exploitation of East Bengal, the people of that region had to reject the bases of the foreign policy of Pakistan as well. It was discovered by them that unless the nature of Indo-Pakistan relations changed, their attempt to re-structure the politics of Pakistan was bound to fail.

When the collapse of the Ayub regime occurred in 1969, two different sets of forces were at work against it. Within West Pakistan, progressive and democratic forces had begun to feel that the structure that Ayub built was only benefiting a few families at the cost of millions of people. In East Bengal, popular forces were convinced that their national rights could not be achieved without ending the Ayub regime. Unfortunately, there was still a great hiatus between the ethos of West Pakistan and that of East Bengal, largely because the democratic forces in West Pakistan were organised under the leadership of Bhutto for whom nothing was more important than continued and unabated hostility towards India.

The temporary unison of the anti-Ayub forces of East Pakistan and West Pakistan succeeded in upsetting the Ayub regime and forcing General Yahya Khan to promise transfer of power to the democratically elected leaders. The elections, however, paved the ground for a new confrontation. In each wing the elections resulted in overwhelming victory for one party but there was no basis for the integration of the political cultures of the two parties that emerged victorious in the 1970 elections. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League and Z. A. Bhutto's People's Party were two entirely different political entities with divergent ethos and if the former was an irresistible cannon-ball, the latter was an impregnable wall.

Subsequent events in Pakistan are now well known. President Yahya Khan had two op-

tions: He could keep the long term interests of the unity and integrity of the Pakistani State in view and come to terms with the leaders of East Bengal, accepting their demand for full autonomy and ignoring the persistent efforts of Bhutto to undermine any such effort. He could also brush aside these long term considerations and opt for the short cut of suppression of the people of East Bengal in order to sustain the legitimacy of his regime in West Pakistan.

President Yahya Khan has apparently chosen the latter course. In doing so, he has unleashed uncontrollable historical forces. The people of East Bengal have now proclaimed their independence. The military dictator has succeeded for the time being in averting a crisis in West Pakistan, perhaps only to create an impossible situation in the months ahead.

As for East Bengal, there is no sign of light yet at the end of the tunnel into which the rulers of Pakistan have entered. How long and protracted the struggle of the people of East Bengal will have to be is still uncertain. There is, however, no doubt that no return to *status quo ante* is possible in Pakistan. East Bengal will either remain an occupied territory or become independent.

If the leaders in Islamabad are thinking that they would be able to occupy East Bengal for long, they are gravely mistaken. West Pakistanis do not have the resources necessary to conduct a massive anti-insurgency war so far away from their own land. The people of East Bengal are much tougher than they were thought to be. Their national determination has only been solidified by the brutal elimination of the cream of their elite. Above all, there is India to prevent the continued occupation of East Bengal by West Pakistan. What happens in East Bengal is no more an internal affair of Pakistan than fire in a neighbour's house is of the neighbour alone.

Already India has been harmed greatly by the crisis in Pakistan. In fact what started as Pakistan's crisis is rapidly becoming a crisis for India. With millions of refugees pouring into the eastern region of the country, India today faces an extremely difficult situation. Her own political stability, economic progress and social cohesion are being grievously threatened by the situation in East Bengal. There are also great moral and ethical considerations which India cannot ignore, just as it cannot forget the many ties of history, geography and culture between the peoples of India and the people of Pakistan. How can Pakistan continue to dominate over East Bengal if India is determined to prevent it?

SISIR GUPTA

# The genesis of pakistan

## A STATE OF NORTH-WESTERN MUSLIMS: IQBAL

[Extract from *The Presidential Address at The All India Muslim League, Allahabad, 1930*]

India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages and professing different religions. Their behaviour is not at all determined by a common race-consciousness. Even the Hindus do not form a homogeneous group. The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognising the fact of communal groups. The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India is, therefore, perfectly justified. The resolution of the All-Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi is to my mind wholly inspired by this noble ideal of a harmonious whole which, instead of

stiffing the respective individualities of its component wholes, affords them chances of fully working out the possibilities that may be latent in them. And I have no doubt that this house will emphatically endorse the Muslim demand embodied in this resolution.

Personally, I would go further than the demands embodied in it. I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of North-West India. The proposal was put forward before the Nehru Committee. They rejected it on the ground that, if



carried into effect, it would give a very unwieldy State. This is true in so far as the area is concerned; in point of population the State contemplated by the proposal would be much less than some of the present Indian provinces. The exclusion of Ambala Division and perhaps of some districts where non-Muslims predominate will make it less extensive and more Muslim in population—so that the exclusion suggested will enable this consolidated State to give a more effective protection to non-Muslim minorities within its area.

The idea need not alarm the Hindus or the British. India is the greatest Muslim country in the world. The life of Islam as a cultural force in this living country very largely depends on its centralisation in a specified territory. This centralisation of the most living portion of the Muslims of India whose military and police service has, notwithstanding unfair treatment from the British, made the British rule possible in this country, will eventually solve the problem of India as well as of Asia. It will intensify their sense of responsibility and deepen their patriotic feeling. Thus possessing full opportunity of development within the body-politic of India, the North West Indian Muslims will prove the best defenders of India against a foreign invasion, be that invasion the one of ideas or bayonets.

The Punjab with fifty-six per cent Muslim population supplies fifty-four per cent of the total combatant troops in the Indian army and if the nineteen thousand Gurkhas recruited from the independent State of Nepal are excluded, the Punjab contingent amounts to sixty-two per cent of the whole Indian army. This percentage does not take into account nearly six thousand combatants supplied to the Indian Army by the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. From this you can easily calculate the possibilities of North-West Indian Muslims in regard to the defence of India against foreign aggression. The Right Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri thinks that the Muslim demand for the creation of autonomous

Muslim States along the North-West border is actuated by a desire 'to acquire means of exerting pressure in emergencies on the Government of India'. I may frankly tell him that the Muslim demand is not actuated by the kind of motive he imputes to us; it is actuated by a genuine desire for free development which is practically impossible under the type of unitary government contemplated by the nationalist Hindu politicians with a view to secure permanent communal dominance in the whole of India.

(*The Indian Annual Register*, July-December 1930, p. 337-338).

#### **HOMELANDS FOR ALL INDIAN MUSLIMS: THE LAHORE RESOLUTION**

[*Extracts from the Resolution adopted by The All-India Muslim League at Lahore, 24 March, 1940*]

This session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of Federation embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is totally unsuited to and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of this country, and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India...

.. Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered *de novo*, and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'independent

States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign: that adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitutions for minorities in the units and in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Muslims are in a minority adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

This session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary.

#### **A SINGLE STATE OF PAKISTAN: MUSLIM LEAGUE LEGISLATORS**

[*Resolution adopted by the Muslim League Legislators' Convention in Delhi, 1946*]

Whereas in this vast sub-continent of India, 100 million Muslims are the adherents of a faith which regulates every department of their life (educational, social, economic and political), whose code is not confined merely to spiritual doctrines and tenets or rituals and ceremonies and which stands in sharp contrast to the exclusive nature of Hindu *dharma* and philosophy which has fostered and maintained for thousands of years a rigid caste system resulting in the degradation of 60 million human beings to the position of untouchables, creation of unnatural barriers between man and man and superimposition of social and economic inequalities on a large body of the people of this country, and which threatens to reduce

Muslims, Christians and other minorities to the status of irredeemable helots, socially and economically...

Whereas, different historical back-grounds, traditions, cultures, social and economic orders of the Hindus and the Muslims made impossible the evolution of a single Indian nation inspired by common aspirations and ideals and whereas after centuries they still remain two distinct major nations;...

Whereas the Muslims are convinced that with a view to saving Muslim India from the domination of the Hindus and in order to afford them full scope to develop themselves according to their genius, it is necessary to constitute a sovereign independent State, comprising Bengal and Assam in the north-east zone and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the north-west zone;...

This Convention of the Muslim League Legislators of India, Central and Provincial, after careful consideration hereby declare that the Muslim nation will never submit to any constitution for a United India and will never participate in any single constitution making machinery set up for the purpose, and that any formula devised by the British Government for transferring power from the British to the peoples of India, which does not conform to the following just, equitable principles, calculated to maintain internal peace and tranquillity in the country, will not contribute to the solution of the Indian problem...

That the zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the north-east and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the north-west of India, namely, Pakistan zones, where the Muslims are a dominant majority, be constituted into a sovereign independent State and that an unequivocal undertaking be given to implement the establishment of Pakistan without delay...

That two separate constitution-making bodies be set up by the

peoples of Pakistan and Hindustan for the purpose of framing their respective constitutions...

That the minorities in Pakistan and Hindustan be provided with safeguards on the lines of the All-India Muslim League resolution passed on the 23rd March 1940, at Lahore.

That the acceptance of the Muslim League demand for Pakistan and its implementation without delay are the *sine qua non* for the Muslim League co-operation and participation in the formation of an interim government at the Centre.

This convention further emphatically declares that any attempt to impose a constitution on a United India basis or to force any interim arrangement at the Centre, contrary to the Muslim demand, will leave the Muslims no alternative but to resist such imposition by all possible means for their survival and national existence.'

## Jinnah's metamorphosis

### A SECULAR DREAM: JINNAH ON PAKISTAN

[Extracts from Inaugural Address at The Pakistan Constituent Assembly, 11 August, 1947]

Now, if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses and the poor. If you will work in co-operation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that every one of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the

past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.

I cannot emphasise it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities—the Hindu community and the Muslim community, because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vaishnavas, Khatri, also Bengalis, Madrasis, and so on—will vanish. Indeed, if you ask me, this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain the freedom and independence and but for this we would have been free peoples long long ago. No power can hold another nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls in subjection; nobody could have conquered you and, even if it had happened, nobody could have continued his hold on you for any length of time but for this. Therefore we must learn a lesson from this. You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan, you may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State.

As you know, history shows that in England conditions some time ago were much worse than those prevailing in India today. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants persecuted each other. Even now there are some States in existence where there are discriminations made and bars imposed against a particular class. Thank God we are not starting in those days. We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State. The people of England in course of time had to face the realities of

the situation and had to discharge the responsibilities and burdens placed upon them by the government of their country and they went through that fire step by step. Today, you might say with justice that Roman Catholics and Protestants do not exist; what exists now is that every man is a citizen, an equal citizen, of Great Britain and they are all members of the nation.

Now, I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.

#### URDU AS LINGUA FRANCA: JINNAH IN DACCA

[Extract from Convocation Address at the Dacca University, 28 March, 1948]

The recent language controversy, in which I am sorry to make note, some of you allowed yourselves to get involved even after your Prime Minister had clarified the position, is only one of the many subtle ways whereby the poison of provincialism is being sedulously injected into this province. Does it not strike you rather odd that certain sections of the Indian Press to whom the very name of Pakistan is anathema, should in the matter of language controversy, set themselves up as the champions of what they call your 'just rights'? Is it not significant that the very persons who in the past have betrayed the Mussalmans or fought against Pakistan, which is after all merely the embodiment of your fundamental right of self-determination, should now suddenly pose as the saviours of your just rights and incite you to defy the government on the question of language? I must warn you to beware of these fifth columnists.

province the people of the province can choose any language they wish. This question will be decided solely in accordance with the wishes of the people of this province alone, as freely expressed through their accredited representatives at the appropriate time and after full and dispassionate consideration. There can, however, be only one *lingua franca*, that is, the language for inter-communication between the various provinces of the State, and that language should be Urdu and cannot be any other. The State language therefore must obviously be Urdu, a language that has been nurtured by a hundred million Muslims of this sub-continent, a language understood throughout the length and breadth of Pakistan and above all, a language which, more than any other provincial language, embodies the best that is in Islamic culture and Muslim tradition and is nearest to the language used in other Islamic countries. It is not without significance that Urdu has been driven out of the Indian Union and that even the official use of the Urdu script has been disallowed.

Those facts are fully known to the people who are trying to exploit the language controversy in order to stir up trouble. There was no justification for agitation but it did not suit their purpose to admit this. Their sole object in exploiting this controversy is to create a split among the Muslims of this State, as indeed they have made no secret of their efforts to incite hatred against non-Bengali Mussalmans. Realising, however, that the statement that your Prime Minister made on the language controversy, on return from Karachi, left no room for agitation, in so far as it conceded the right of the people of this province to choose Bengali as their official language if they so wished, these persons changed their tactics. They started demanding that Bengali should be the State language of the Pakistan Centre and since they could not overlook the obvious claims of Urdu as the official language of a Muslim State, they proceeded to demand

that both Bengali and Urdu should be the State languages of Pakistan. Make no mistake about it. There can be only one State language, if the component parts of this State are to march forward in unison and that language, in my opinion, can only be Urdu. I have spoken at some length on this subject so as to warn you of the kind of tactics adopted by the enemies of Pakistan and certain opportunist politicians to try to disrupt this State or to discredit the government.

#### WE ARE ALL MUSLIMS: JINNAH ON STATE IDEOLOGY

[Extract from a Speech at a public meeting in Dacca, 21 March, 1948]

There is a certain feeling, I am told, in some parts of this province against non-Bengali Muslims. There has also lately been a certain amount of excitement over the question whether Bengali or Urdu shall be the State language of this province and of Pakistan. In this latter connection, I hear that some discreditable attempts have been made by political opportunists to make a tool of the student community in Dacca to embarrass the administration.

My young friends, students who are present here, let me tell you as one who has always had love and affection for you, who has served you for ten years faithfully and loyally, let me give you this word of warning: you will be making the greatest mistake if you allow yourself to be exploited by one political party or other. Remember, there has been a revolutionary change. It is our own government. We are a free, independent and sovereign State. Let us behave and regulate our affairs as free men; we are not suppressed and oppressed under the regime of a foreign domination; we have broken those chains, we have thrown off those shackles. My young friends, I look forward to you as the real makers of Pakistan, do not be exploited and do not be misled. Create amongst yourselves complete unity and

Let me restate my views on the question of a State language of Pakistan. For official use in this

solidarity. Set and example of what youth can do...

Having failed to prevent the establishment of Pakistan, thwarted and frustrated by their failure, the enemies of Pakistan have now turned their attention to disrupt the State by creating a split amongst the Muslims of Pakistan. These attempts have taken the shape principally of encouraging provincialism.

As long as you do not throw off this poison in our body politic, you will never be able to weld yourself, mould yourself, galvanise yourself into a real true nation. What we want is not to talk about Bengali, Punjabi, Sindhi, Baluchi, Pathan and so on. They are of course units. But I ask you; have you forgotten the lesson that was taught to us thirteen hundred years ago? - If I may point out, you are all outsiders here. Who were the original inhabitants of Bengal—not those who are now living. So what is the use of saying 'we are Bengalis or Sindhis, or Pathans, or Punjabis'. No, we are Muslims.

About language, as I have already said, this is in order to create disruption amongst the Mussalmans. Your Prime Minister has rightly pointed this out in a recent statement and I am glad that his government have decided to put down firmly any attempt to disturb the peace of this province by political saboteurs or their agents. Whether Bengali shall be the official language of this province is a matter for the elected representatives of the people of this province to decide. I have no doubt that this question shall be decided solely in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants of this province at the appropriate time.

Let me tell you in the clearest language that there is no truth that your normal life is going to be touched or disturbed so far as your Bengali language is concerned. But ultimately it is for you, the people of this province, to decide what shall be the language of your province. But let me make it very clear to you that the

State language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Any one who tries to mislead you is really the enemy of Pakistan. Without one State language, no nation can remain tied up solidly together and function. Look at the history of other countries. Therefore, so far as the State language is concerned, Pakistan's language shall be Urdu.

## Confrontation begins

### THE IDEOLOGY OF PAKISTAN: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

*[The Objectives Resolution of March 4, 1949 as adopted by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly]*

In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful;

Whereas sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to God Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by him is a sacred trust;

This Constituent Assembly representing the people of Pakistan resolves to frame a constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan;

Wherein the State shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people;

Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed;

Wherein Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings

and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunna;

Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practise their religions and develop their cultures;

Whereby the territories now included in or in accession with Pakistan and such other territories as may hereafter be included in or accede to Pakistan shall form a Federation wherein the units will be autonomous with such boundaries and limitations on their powers and authority as may be prescribed;

Wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public majority;

Wherein adequate provision shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes;

Wherein the independence of the judiciary shall be fully secured;

Wherein the integrity of the territories of the Federation, its independence and all its rights including its sovereign rights on land, sea and air shall be safeguarded;

So that the people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honoured place amongst the nations of the World and make their full contribution towards international peace and progress and happiness of humanity.

### THE DEMAND FOR BENGALI: RAJKUMAR CHAKRAVARTY

*[Extract from a speech by the Congress member in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, April 1952]*

Professor Raj Kumar Chakravarty (East Bengal: General): Sir, I have already tabled a motion on the

subject stating that Bengali should be one of the State languages of Pakistan. Now I rise to support the motion of Mr. Nur Ahmed and oppose the amendment moved by the Honourable Pirzada Adus Sattar. Sir, Pakistan is a multi-lingual State. There is, therefore, scope for having more than one language as the State language or languages of Pakistan. If we look round and study the history of the progressive countries of the world today, we find there are countries where there is more than one State language. For example, there is Canada; there is Switzerland and there is Russia. Therefore, when I support the motion I do so because there is a good precedent in favour of the statement that Bengali should be one of the State languages of Pakistan.

Sir, in supporting this motion, I do so not in any spirit of rivalry against any other language. Certainly, I have no objection to Urdu being one of the State languages of Pakistan. As regards Arabic, the claim of that also may be considered later on. In supporting this motion I have no ill-will against any people of this great land of Pakistan, but I merely express a genuine and spontaneous urge of the four crores of the people who inhabit eastern Pakistan. I believe, Sir, if the House adopts this motion, it will lead to a better understanding among all sections of the people of Pakistan, especially between its two wings. The stage has now come, Sir, when the matter brooks no delay and we should come to a decision.

Sir, you must have noted and the Members of this House must have seen in the Press that all the political organisations in East Bengal worth the name have supported the cause of Bengali to be one of the State languages of Pakistan. The Muslim League there, the Muslim League Parliamentary Party, the East Bengal Legislature, the Pakistan National Congress, the Executive Committee of the Dacca University, the East Pakistan Jamait-ul-Ulema-Islam and many organisations,

whose number is legion, have supported the cause of Bengali. Then, Sir, last but not the least, the Press of East Bengal with one or two exceptions have supported the claim of Bengal; those who are veterans in the field of journalism, have made a fervent appeal to their brothers in western Pakistan and to the people of western Pakistan generally to support the cause of Bengali as one of the State languages of Pakistan. There are many other organisations, leaders of thought and public opinion who have given their support unequivocally in respect of Bengali to be one of the State languages of Pakistan.

Sir, in supporting this motion I do nothing more, and nothing less than express the genuine and spontaneous urge of the numerous people of eastern Pakistan. Sir, on behalf of East Bengal, I take this opportunity of conveying my sense of gratitude to those people in western Pakistan and to the members of the Press, outside East Bengal, who have given support to our genuine and right cause. Particularly, I mention the name of Mr. Suleri, the Editor of the *Evening Times*, who had been to East Bengal, studied the situation himself and tried to give a picture to East Bengal, of the situation to his fellow-countrymen in western Pakistan. Sir, in supporting this motion, I hope nobody will find me guilty of narrow provincialism. It is no provincialism at all. It is the demand of democracy; it is the demand of self-determination. Here are more than four crores of people who want to determine for themselves what their State language should be; and I think, Sir, in the interest of the high principle of self-determination, for which we all and the nations of the world stand today, and for the sake of democracy, the claim of Bengali should not be overlooked for being one of the State languages of Pakistan.

Sir, I would ask the House in this connection to realise the changes in some of our modern political ideals. Formerly, the idea of a State was that there

would be one people, there would be one State and there would be one State language. Today, with the progress of time, we find in many progressive countries of the world, there are different peoples inhabiting a State; there are different languages spoken by the people of the country and there are different State languages also as I have already exemplified from the case of Canada, Switzerland and Russia. Sir, as a result of the introduction of more than one State languages in those countries, their unity has not been jeopardized in any way...

Sir, the former idea of one State language was the argument of imperialists when they wanted to foist their languages on other people, and when they tried to have a cleavage between the rulers and the ruled. But today the situation has altered in Pakistan. We are a free, and independent and democratic people. I do not think there is any desire in any quarter in Pakistan to have imperialism. I do not think there is any desire on the part of anybody today to create a cleavage between the different sections of the people and I do not think there is also any desire on the part of anybody to foist a language upon the unwilling people of any part of this country. Therefore Sir, I submit no harm will ensue if Bengali is made one of the State languages of Pakistan.

Sir, before I conclude I shall say a few words about the literary and the linguistic merits of the Bengali language. It is not only the language of the majority of Pakistanis, but is also the richest language not only of Pakistan, but of the whole of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. It has a history of over a thousand years and has a wonderful vitality to develop and absorb foreign influences. In the last hundred years its development has been phenomenal... Not only that. It has its intricate roots of connection with Sanskrit, with Hindustani, with Urdu and with Persian. It is also the language which has most completely absorbed the

spirit of western literature. Basically eastern in origin, it is of all the languages of the subcontinent, the most modern and most western in outlook.

Sir, one word more and I have done. I find there is an amendment which seeks to postpone the consideration of the matter. Sir, in the opinion of us sitting on this side of the House, this proposal is not a sound and right one in the existing circumstances of the country. This matter of Bengali being one of the State languages of Pakistan has been hanging fire since the year 1948 when the Honourable Khwaja Nazimuddin was the Chief Minister of East Bengal. There was an agitation then and he assured the people that he would see that Bengali is made one of the State languages in Pakistan. Since then there have been repeated agitations and demands over this issue. There have been very unfortunate and untoward happenings. There has been promulgation of Section 144. There have been arrests and detentions. There has been loss of precious lives also. We all deplore these happenings. Sir, by opposing the postponement of this motion, we want to put a stop to all such unhappy events which may happen again if this question is not tackled today. Therefore, Sir, I submit that the matter brooks no delay and we should settle the matter once for all, now and here, and we should not allow any more unfortunate incidents to occur in this connection. With these few words I support the motion and oppose the amendment.

#### THE PUNJAB LEFT IN DEFENCE OF BENGAL: IFTIKHAR- UDDIN

[Extract from a speech in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, November, 1953]

Mian Muhammad Iftikharuddin (Punjab: Muslim): Mr. President, Sir, this amendment is a typical example of how Mr. Nurul Amin on the one hand and Malik Firoz Khan Noon on the other...

The Honourable Malik Muham-

mad Firoz Khan Noon, (Punjab: Muslim): Oh! oh! oh!

Mian Muhammad Iftikharuddin: ... have agreed to protect their own interests and harm the interest of the people of Pakistan. Mr. Nurul Amin may have scored a point for his election propaganda but actually the people of Bengal should know that by the mere sitting of the future Parliament of Pakistan for one session in East Bengal does not solve their problems. Sir, the people of Bengal want that the matters which concern them should be decided and worked out in offices in Dacca. I can say with confidence that during the last six years out of one thousand—or even ten thousand—people who visited the offices of the Central Government the number of visitors from West Pakistan would have been very very large. I am sure out of a thousand persons visiting offices of the Central Government in Karachi only one person would have been from East Bengal; 999 people were Western Pakistanis. Non-official persons cannot afford to come to Karachi to present their grievances to the officials.

So, the people of Bengal have not gained in any way. They are not fortunate enough to be brought here by a specially chartered plane of the Muslim League like the members of this Assembly who by some hook or crook are able to get to Karachi.

On the other hand, Mr. Firoz Khan Noon has succeeded in retaining the offices of the Central Government in Karachi and adding to the existing inefficiency because when the Parliament is sitting on that side the offices here are bound to grow more inefficient. You may say that a few Secretaries or a few Joint Secretaries or Deputy Secretaries may fly during the period when the Assembly is sitting in Dacca but that is not sufficient. The main offices cannot go there and so the inefficiency increases. The attention of those officers is divided. So in general Mr. Noon, by agreeing to this, has harmed the interests of Pakistan in so far as the future Government of Pakistan will be

even more inefficient than it is today. The Ministers would be sitting there and the offices would be run here and no supervision would take place. Inefficiency will be greater.

Both these leaders have succeeded, by agreeing amongst themselves, to safeguard their own interests. Mr. Nurul Amin can go and win the elections or perhaps try to postpone them, as he is actually doing. Whether he succeeds in this or not is a different matter. So Mr. Amin may go and boast that he has got a great feather in his cap and thus win the elections. But actually both, as I have stated, Sir, have harmed the interests of Pakistan and have cheated the country. Mr. Nurul Amin, with due respect I say, has deceived the people of Bengal and Mr. Noon by agreeing to this has generally harmed the interests of the people of Pakistan and also the interests of the people of western Pakistan, because, as I have said, the Central Government will be more incompetent than it is today. Sir, this amendment can be said to be realistic in one way and it can be said to be right too. It is in that sense in which my friend Mr. Nur Ahmed, who has just sat down, has understood it, I think. It is realistic because it shows that the present arrangement was not only cumbersome but it cannot solve the problems of the people of Pakistan even if the Assembly is taken to Dacca. I am not opposing that amendment but what I say is that even the taking of the Assembly for one session to East Bengal does not solve the problem.

It is a realistic proposition in indicating to us that the present constitution is not only unrealistic but cumbersome. The only solution is that you give full-fledged powers to the Government at Dacca, absolutely complete powers in all matters that concern East Bengal and the areas on that side. You then have a full-fledged government here on a federal basis in western Pakistan. Then you should confederate with the Government of East Bengal. When

I say, 'You confederate' I have in mind what confederation means.

What I have in mind is that there should be just committees representing the two Cabinets for foreign affairs and defence. Let there be a full-fledged department of each subject on this side. Let there be one Foreign Affairs Committee, and one committee for defence and one for foreign affairs and there should be one from one zone and the other from the other zone. Then there can be one President and one Vice-President, that also one from one zone and the other from the other zone. Similarly, the President would be from one zone and the Vice-President from the other. That Committee which will run our foreign affairs and our defence affairs will certainly sit in Dacca or the Governor-General or President may go to Dacca for 6 months and may remain here for six months. But the actual departments will be governed in their own areas and will be governed efficiently. There will be no question of intrigue in that case.

This would be in keeping with the Lahore Resolution which demanded complete autonomy on both sides. Realists who were actually inspired by the desire for independence and not the desire for power politics, as are the people of today, people who rule today, as the people in 1940 were, they worked on the right lines and as their aspirations were right so their decisions were also right. They clearly said that there will be two autonomous States, one in northern and one in north-eastern areas of the then united India. That is the only way and in future when our Parliament works for longer duration it would create great difficulties. In fact even in India where democracy of a substantial level exists, the Parliament sits for about 9 months in the year and in England it sits even longer. Now when we come to that level and our House sits for nine months, out of this for 4 months the House would be sitting in Dacca and the offices

would be functioning without supervision.

## THE 1954 ELECTIONS IN EAST BENGAL

[Extract from a report in *Keesings' Contemporary Archives*, April 10-17, 1954]

Provincial elections held in East Bengal (East Pakistan) from March 8-11 resulted in an overwhelming victory for the United Front (Jukto Front), an alliance of parties opposed to the ruling Moslem League. The results were as follows:

Moslem Seats (237)	
United Front	223
Moslem League	10
Independents	3
Khilafat-e-Rabani	1
Minority Seats (72)	
Pakistan National Congress	24
Minority United Front	10
Ganatantri Dal	3
Communists	4
Scheduled Caste Federation	27
Christian	1
Buddhists	2
Independent (Caste Hindu)	1
	309

The United Front included three Moslem opposition parties: The Awami Moslem League, formed in 1949 by Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy, a former Chief Minister of Bengal before partition, the Krishak Sramik Party led by Mr. A.K. Fazlul Huq, also a former Chief Minister of Bengal; and the Nizam-i-Islam, a religious group representing the mullahs. It was also supported by the Communists and other Left wing groups, and by some Hindu organisations.

The main items in its programme were as follows: (1) Recognition of Bengali as an official language on a par with Urdu. (This issue had aroused strong feeling in the province since the Basic Prin-

ciples Committee of the Pakistani Constituent Assembly had proposed Urdu as the only official language in 1950, and had led in 1952 to widespread strikes and demonstrations, in which a number of students were killed after the police had opened fire when the crowds got out of control). (2) Rejection of the draft Constitution, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, and its replacement by a directly elected body. (3) Complete autonomy for East Pakistan in all matters except defence, foreign policy, and currency, which would be reserved

to the Central Legislature. (4) Complete freedom from the Centre with regard to export of jute. (5) Consultation between the Centre and East Pakistan on the allocation of foreign exchange for imports. (6) Abolition of the Indo-Pakistani passport and visa system and of existing restrictions on trade between East and West. (7) Devaluation of the Pakistani rupee.

Although foreign policy issues played no major part in the election campaign, the Awami Moslem League (the leading party in the United Front) was known to be hostile to the acceptance of U.S. military aid, which the provincial president of the League, Maulana



Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, denounced on March 19 as a 'slave pact' with the 'American Imperialist warmongers'.

### **'DISLOYALTY' AND 'TREASON': MOHAMMED ALI BOGRA.**

*(Statement of Mohammed Ali, the Prime Minister of Pakistan on the dissolution of the U.F. Ministry, 1954).*

After discussions with the East Bengal Chief Minister and his colleagues in Karachi, we concluded that the Administration in the Province has virtually broken down, and that the present Ministry is not able either to secure the lives and properties of the people of East Bengal or to inspire that confidence in the Administration and the people which is an essential prerequisite to the working of an orderly and progressive Government. We have therefore decided to take over the administration of the Province under Section 92 (A) of the Government of India Act of 1935 as adapted by Pakistan, which is the basis of the country's present Constitution. Accordingly, the necessary orders under Section 92 (S) dismissing the Provincial Ministry have been promulgated. They will remain in force for the minimum time necessary to restore law and order and public confidence so that Parliamentary government can function successfully. These orders do not affect the present provincial Legislature, which will continue in being...

In the light of information in the Government's possession, two factors stand out clearly. First, there are disruptive forces and enemy agents actively at work in East Bengal to undermine the integrity of Pakistan by setting Moslem against Moslem, class against class, and Province against the Centre. The means used for achieving their immediate objective of disrupting Pakistan and taking over the Province is to create confusion and economic chaos by sabotaging and destroying its industrial progress. The second factor in the situation is that Mr. Fazlul Huq and his colleagues are not prepared to take the action

necessary to cope with this situation.

...the *modus operandi* in all the East Bengal disturbances had been carefully planned beforehand. The significance of the Dacca riots lay in the fact that a person who led the riotous men against the gaol staff was arrested red-handed by the Inspector-General of Police, was subsequently released because of his political influence with the United Front, and was later sworn in as a Minister in Mr. Fazlul Huq's expanded Cabinet. At a public meeting attended by the Chief Minister, the Inspector-General of Police and other officers who had dared to do their duty were severely condemned and their immediate dismissal demanded. A responsible leader of the United Front also publicly threatened the lynching of an official.

The Adamji mills riots had taken place while a Minister of the Provincial Government was present at the mill premises; also present on the spot at that time were the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, an additional District Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police, a sub-divisional officer, a picket of the East Pakistan Rifles, and a body of armed policemen. While the carnage went on the police were not allowed to open fire to disperse the rioters and prevent loss of life and property. ... the riots had dealt dastardly blows at the two biggest industrial establishments in East Bengal (i.e., the Karnaphuli and Adamji mills), and that no Government could afford to ignore a situation pregnant with such disastrous possibilities for the well-being of the Province and the future of Pakistan.

It was clear to us that since his last visit to Karachi, Mr. Fazlul Huq's psychological make-up had undergone a remarkable metamorphosis. During his previous visit he had informed us that he was gravely concerned with the growth of Communist influence in his Province, which had come to the forefront during and after the elections. In fact, as a result of this realization, he said that

whereas formerly he was in favour of a Centre which had responsibility only for the three subjects mentioned in the United Front-manifesto, he had now come to the view that there must be a strong Centre. During his second visit, however, he firmly maintained that there were no communists and no communism in East Bengal. As for a strong Centre, he made a startling public pronouncement symptomatic of this same change of attitude. In an interview with Reuter and New York Times correspondents he stated that his ultimate objective was to secure independence for East Bengal. Confronted with this statement, he denied having ever made it, and issued a contradiction to that effect. Three days later, however, Mr. Huq again changed his mind and in the course of certain discussions plainly told us that his objective was an independent East Bengal...

The statements made by Mr. Fazlul Huq during his recent visit to Calcutta had to be taken into consideration when, speaking at a reception on May 4, he had said that he did 'not believe in the political division of the country', and that the country, India, 'exists as a whole'. Mr. Huq had also said: 'I am, in fact, not familiar with the two words Pakistan and Hindustan', and had added that he considered those to be enemies of India who had divided India. These disloyal utterances, fit in with the historical fact that Mr. Fazlul Huq opposed the establishment of Pakistan. ... I leave Mr. Fazlul Huq and his various statements to the judgement of my countrymen. I have no doubt that their verdict will be that Mr. Fazlul Huq is a traitor to Pakistan. I should say that he is a traitor even to East Bengal, because no man in his senses could imagine that an independent Bengal would last, even as long as Hyderabad did. Mr. Fazlul Huq's pronouncements regarding the independence of East Bengal, viewed against his previous statements on this subject in Calcutta, convinced my colleagues and myself that in Mr. Fazlul Huq we were dealing, not



merely with a provincial Chief Minister whose Government would not take the administrative measures that any responsible Government would take but with a political leader who was fundamentally disloyal to Pakistan.

(*Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1954, pp. 13746-49)

# Military rule

## CALL IT BENGAL: MUJIBUR RAHMAN

[*Extract from a speech in the Constituent Assembly August, 1955*]

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Sir, you will see that they want to place the words 'East Pakistan' instead of 'East Bengal'. We have demanded so many times that you should make it Bengal (Pakistan). The word 'Bengal' has a history, has a tradition of its own. You can change it only after the people have been consulted. If you want to change it, then we will have to go back to Bengal and ask them whether they accept it.

So far as the question of One-Unit is concerned it can come in the Constitution. Why do you want to take it up just now? What about the State language, Bengali, what about joint electorate? What about autonomy? The people of East Bengal will be prepared to consider One-Unit with all these things. So, I appeal to my friends on that side to allow the people to give their verdict in any way, in the form of a referendum or in the form of a plebiscite. Let the people of the Frontier say that they want one unit. At the moment, they say that they are against it. But Dr. Khan Sahib said the other day that people were in favour of One-Unit but

his brother Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif said that they were against it. Now who will judge it? Who should be the judge? If the people of the Frontier say that they are in favour of One-Unit, we have no objection to that. Similarly in Sind, Mr. Khuhro says that they are in favour of it, while Mr. G. M. Syed and others say that people are against One-Unit. All right, if they are in favour let a referendum be held and let the people decide themselves and we will accept it.

As far as Karachi is concerned there should be no referendum in Karachi because it is the Federal Capital made by Quaid-e-Azam and we will not allow people to insult Quaid-e-Azam and the late Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. We have no right to take Karachi from the people of Karachi and from the people of East Pakistan. It belongs to us also as it belongs to other parts of Pakistan. We have spent so much money for its development. Why do you want to make another Capital and spend hundreds and thousands of rupees and for which you will require at least 50 years. For these reasons, I appeal to my friends 'zulum mat karo bhai'. If you will force it upon us, then we have to adopt unconstitutional means. You must proceed constitutionally. If you do not allow the people to follow constitutional means, they will perforce adopt unconstitutional means. This is what has happened all over the world and it can be seen from the history of the world. So I appeal to you, if you love Pakistan, though unfortunately after the achievement of Pakistan, you are at the helm of affairs and those people who fought for its establishment are no more with us.

So, I will appeal to you, although you have got force at your disposal, that for the sake of Pakistan, for the sake of democracy, for the sake of humanity, for the sake of Quaid-e-Azam, go to the people, let the people give their verdict and we will accept it. If the people of Frontier, Sind, Bahawalpur, Khairpur, Baluchistan, want One-

Unit, we will have no objection to that. People of East Bengal at once will tell them, 'take it'. We have no objection to that. So, Sir, I appeal to my friends who are in the fortunate position to consider our views and consider people's opinion and consider about Pakistan, do not wrong and ruin Pakistan for God's sake. Thank you, Sir.

## GIVE US DEMOCRACY: MUJIBUR RAHMAN

[*Extract from speech in the Constituent Assembly Aug., 1955*]

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Is it not an insult to the Members of the Constituent Assembly who are the representatives of the people that all power vests with the Governor-General these days? He can do everything; he is in power in Pakistan. Why have you given him so much power without determining whether the people will like it or not? He enjoys such a vast power that he can dismiss any one he likes, he can appoint anyone, he can extend the dates of the meetings of the Assembly, he can dissolve the House. What about Karachi? Have you taken the opinion of the people? They are all against it. But what have we seen? The other day, the Governor-General by promulgating an order has demarcated the boundary of the Federal Capital. Sir, the Governor-General has been appointed by Her Majesty the Queen of England and he is not the representative of the people of Pakistan. We are the true representatives of the people and we should decide whether Karachi should be included in One-Unit or not; he cannot demarcate the boundary of the Federal Capital so far as Karachi is concerned. It is the Karachi of everybody; it is the property of everybody; it is the property of East Bengal; it is the property of Sind; it is the property of the Punjab; it is the property of the Frontier Province.

My friend, Mr. Khuhro, will remember that when he opposed the exclusion of Karachi from Sind, the Quaid-e-Azam had said, that it would be the Federal Capital of everybody. Now what

we find is that our ruling clique is declaring before the whole world that they are the lovers of Pakistan and they are the lovers of Qaulid-e-Azam; they are. But my friends, we have never seen you struggling for Pakistan—the persons who are occupying the 'Treachery' Benches today.

## ON ONE UNIT IN WEST PAKISTAN: MUJIBUR RAHMAN

[Speech in Constituent Assembly, April 1955]

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (East Bengal: Muslim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I respectfully accept the ruling given by the Chair and, will, therefore, move the first part of my motion. I move:

That the Bill be circulated for purposes of eliciting public opinion thereon by the 30th November, 1955.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been declared by the Honourable Sardar Amir Azam Khan that public opinion has already enlisted its support to the One-Unit Bill. I do not know how Sardar Amir Azam Khan has got the public opinion ascertained with regard to this Bill. Has he consulted the District Magistrates, or has he got the support of the Muslim League Ruling clique in favour of this One-Unit Bill before it has been moved in this House? I fail to understand how he can claim to have the support of the people of Pakistan in favour of this One-Unit Bill. In fact, this issue was never put before the public at any time. Even, Sir, at the time of the last general elections in the provinces of Punjab, Sind, Frontier and other places, this issue was not involved. But, the issue has come before the Constituent Assembly and it is proposed to integrate all the provinces into one unit without consulting public opinion.

How can Sardar Amir Azam say that the people are in favour of One-Unit? Sir, you have seen what happened in the province of Sind. Before Mr. Khuhro, there was the Pirzada Ministry and when it was felt that the Pirzada

Ministry was not in favour of One-Unit, they dismissed that Ministry and installed the Khuhro Ministry instead. And, Sir, Mr. Khuhro was not even a Member of the Assembly at that time. These things happen here—Ministries are dismissed and new Ministries are appointed, and even transferred as was the case in East Bengal. Mr. Abu Husain Sirkar was appointed Chief Minister of East Bengal by the Central Government, while he was a Minister in the Centre. There was, again, an ordinance issued by His Excellency the Governor-General appointing Dr. Khan Sahib, Chief Minister-designate of West Pakistan. Sir, only such things are possible in Pakistan. You will notice that it is in Pakistan that such acts are committed and nowhere else in the world. You might have seen that in Sind, even Honourable Members who are against this One-Unit are being harassed and interned and externed by the Khuhro Ministry. . .

The Honourable Mr. M. A. Khuhro (Sind: Muslim): On a point of explanation, Sir. . .

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: It is only the ruling clique in Sind that is in . . . favour of this One-Unit move. . .

The Honourable Mr. M. A. Khuhro: The Honourable Member is making insinuating remarks. . .

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Mr. Speaker, will you allow this man to interrupt my speech?

Mr. Speaker: I cannot allow any personal explanation at this stage. Let the Honourable Member speak without interruptions.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: We have seen such things happening in Sind. If they are sure that the people in general are in favour of One-Unit, let there be a referendum on this question and then only you can know the true public opinion. So far as we are concerned, we know that people in Sind are against this One-Unit. It is only Mr. Khuhro and his party of a few members who are in

favour of this One-Unit move and they are just trying to satisfy the whims of the ruling clique at the Centre. This is the state of affairs in Sind.

Now, take the case of Punjab. I definitely know Malik Firoz Khan Noon had some difference of opinion over the question of One-Unit. There was some difference between the Central ruling clique and Mr. Firoz Khan Noon and all of a sudden Mr. Firoz Khan Noon who was till the previous day a *frishta* and was called the best man in Pakistan, was thrown out from his Chief Ministership the next morning. He was dismissed and he is now dubbed as anti-Pakistani or anti-State because the ruling clique at the Centre do not see eye to eye with him.

Then what have we seen in the Frontier? Sardar Abdur Rashid who was similarly a *frishta* like Firoz Khan Noon, and who was the man who had moved the One-Unit Bill in the Frontier Assembly and who was also considered as the best man in Pakistan by the ruling clique and who was asked to mobilise public opinion in favour of One-Unit in N.W.F.P. when he later on demanded the verdict of the people on this plan, and found it against One-Unit and he agreed with that, he was dismissed all of a sudden and a man, not even a member of the Frontier Assembly, was made the Chief Minister of that Province. Now, Sir, who will judge it and who will decide the future of this country? Is it the ruling clique which will decide the future of Pakistan or the people will decide it?

## THE NEED FOR AUTONOMY: MUJIBUR RAHMAN

[Extract from a Speech in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, February, 1956]

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: All right, Sir, I call it a part of my speech. So, Sir, E.B. Railway had a net profit of Rs. 195 lakhs in 1948-49 and a net profit of Rs. 139 lakhs in 1949-50. But Annexure 'G' . . . 1951-52, show that E.B. Railway suffered a loss of Rs. 65

lakhs, in 1948-49 and a loss of Rs. 107 lakhs in 1949-50. Such reversal of certified and immutable account is not only preposterous and unthinkable in any commercial concern but the same is even actionable in law. To add to the wonders, the present management of the Railway still tries to argue out this too obvious contradiction in their accounts in 1948-49 and 1949-50 that they had some other accounts of debits, not taken into consideration in the Profit and Loss Accounts of these two years.

The management at the same time vehemently maintains that profit and loss accounts of those years are perfectly correct. The explanation cannot possibly be clumsier and more stupid. In a word, E.B. Railway must have been a profitable concern, though it has made only a nominal profit as is shown in the positive difference between the incomings and outgoings of E.B. Railway in the Accountant General, Pakistan, revenues returns. But from 1950-51, it has been a deliberate effort of the Railway Administration to represent E.B. Railway as a losing concern throughout, even by reversing previous accounts to cover up gross mismanagement and bungling of the worst type.

In fact, if E.B. Railway administration was only tolerably efficient, it could have earned a respectable amount of profit in place of a nominal profit of Rs. 21 lakhs a year. Even the profit and loss accounts in the Appropriation Accounts of Pakistan Railways underestimate the profit by deducting from gross earnings an average interest charge of about Rs. 120 lakhs a year for the entire capital account of the E.B. Railway assets, the bulk of which has been received as an inheritance from pre-Partition India and not formed by any subsequent capital expenditure. The entire interest charge has moreover been made over to the Central Railway Reserve Fund rather than to the Reserve Fund of the E.B. Railway. Moreover, appropriation to the depreciation fund, from the gross earnings have also worked out to an annual average of Rs. 99 lakhs. Accounting apart, expenses of the E.B. Rail-

way were unnecessarily inflated by purchasing from Japan 25 MGYD class locomotives at a cost of Rs. 150 lakhs, 10 diesel engines at a cost of Rs. 1 crore, 13 engines at Rs. 1 crore and 700 wagons at a cost of Rs. 210 lakhs, in all costing Rs. 560 lakhs, all of which are lying idle and cannot be used.

Honourable Deputy Speaker: Very interesting, but all of it is irrelevant.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: I am sorry, Sir, I have to finish it.

Honorable Deputy Speaker: Please, finish it quickly.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: All right, Sir. The losses due to this only work up to Rs. 80 lakhs a year. Moreover nine old but good engines of E.B. Railway were made over to North-Western Railway at their depreciated book values and in their place nine diesel engines were bought by E.B. Railway on which interest charge was made heavier thereby. Again, E.B. Railway has suffered an average annual loss of Rs. 12 lakhs a year, by maintaining a surplus staff of pre-Partition India and by giving expatriation allowance of about Rs. 2 lakhs a year for employees preferring domicile in the western wing of the country. If E.B. Railway were and is even tolerably efficiently managed, it could easily give and can give an annual profit of Rs. 300 lakhs. A question may be asked here, how could E.B. Railway mismanage and bungle its affairs so badly as to bring it to the level of nearly no profit. The answer is simple. The Railway Division of the Ministry of Communications could not maintain any effective control from distant Karachi on the Chittagong management who worked like little dictators and did whatever they liked...It should, therefore, be frankly admitted that commercial concerns like Railways in East Bengal cannot be administered from distant Karachi and as such the same should be controlled locally as a Provincial subject...

In the Central Government Services, those who form 56 per cent of the population are not

getting a 5 per cent share. The East Bengal people are educated, but they are not getting their share. Sir, we do not blame the West Pakistan people. In fact we want autonomy for them also. If East Pakistan gets autonomy, the West Pakistan people will also get autonomy. We blame the ruling junta. These jagirdars suppressed the peoples' opinion in West Pakistan. They are so much suppressed, they cannot cry, they cannot demand, but the people of East Pakistan are politically conscious. They challenge anybody and everybody. They challenge Mr. Fazlul Haq, Mr. Suhrawardy, Moulana Bhashani; they challenge their leaders. They tell their leaders 'You have done this wrong and we will not vote for you' but they have been suppressed, persecuted and they have been economically ruined.

#### URDU AND BENGALI: MOULANA RASHID

[Extract from a Speech by Moulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish in the Constituent Assembly, January, 1956]

Thus eight years have passed. Urdu has been made compulsory in the extreme village primary schools. Different ways and means have been adopted for the introduction of Urdu in East Pakistan but no such machinery has so far been installed in West Pakistan even if one out of curiosity likes to learn the language of 44 crores of people. We would have considered them to be the worthy leaders if they had adopted the same method for including Bengali as a compulsory subject in the educational institutions in West Pakistan as they did in the case of Urdu in East Pakistan. But what we witnessed during the past eight years was that by hook or by crook all efforts were made to push Urdu to become the State language and to ignore Bengali. This has been done in accordance with an oath they have taken in this regard. And the continuance of English for a further 20 years with the declaration of Urdu and Bengali as official languages is linked with the same motive and

oath to run Bengali, conceal their ulterior motive and the cat was out of the bag when in clause 31 of the Bill they provided that it should be the duty of the Federal and Provincial Governments to take all possible measures for the development and growth of a national language. The alphabet 'A' does not mean two but 'one'. There shall be only one national language. There is no mention there that two languages, Urdu and Bengali, will be declared State languages after 20 years. They have instead said 'one'. They could not dare to state the reasons as to why there should be one. If they want to argue that the word 'one' has been coined for the solidarity of the country, a question obviously arises: what will be the criterion to decide that one State language? Those who believe in democracy will surely agree with the criterion that the language of the majority of the population should be the State language.

#### **DISTORTION OF ISLAM: MUJIBUR RAHMAN**

*[Speech in the Constituent Assembly, January, 1956]*

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Pakistan is for Pakistanis. Pakistan has not been formed for the Muslims alone. My friend says: 'We want to make a constitution for all the Muslims of the world'. All right, then, why are you not making a constitution for the 50 crores of Muslims of the entire world? You have the monopoly because we the Pakistanis are Muslims, but there are Muslims in India, Muslims in Indonesia, we have Muslims in Iraq, in Egypt and in Turkey, and at other places. Muslims are not only in Pakistan. Then why should this constitution be confined to the Muslims of Pakistan alone: it should be for the Muslims of the world—as if you have a monopoly from Allah that you would make a constitution for the whole Muslim world? Why not make constitution for every other community in Pakistan, so that there should be two Houses—one for the Muslims and another for the minorities,—or say five or

six Houses, for also Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, etc., each having one House to themselves. But you are making an Islamic Constitution. My friend says: 'Oh, for Islam', but Islam means justice; Islam means equity; Islam means fairplay; Islam means equal distribution of wealth among the people according to the needs of the individual. My friends of the United Front say that they cannot. They want to bluff the people of Pakistan in the name of Islam.

#### **FOR JOINT ELECTORATE: MUJIBUR RAHMAN**

*[Extract from a Speech in the Constituent Assembly, January, 1956]*

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Now, I come to the question of electorates. Sir, nowhere in any Constitution in the world, you will find that they have provided for electorates in it except perhaps in the case of South Africa where they have two races—the privileged class and the unprivileged class. They have in South Africa Indians, Pakistanis and the Africans. But in Pakistan there is no such difference. But they have deliberately left this provision untouched in the Constitution. Why have they done so? They want to deceive the minority community living in Pakistan. Sir, I recently had been to East Bengal and there I had the chance of discussing the Constitution with the masses in general. There, the people want joint electorates, but they are helpless. They cannot raise their feeble voice against the Centre and if they dare to do that, the next day the Ministry of Mr. Abu Hussain Sarkar will fall. I fail to understand why they do not want to give joint electorate to the people when they are themselves asking for it. Nowhere in the world are there separate electorates excepting in South Africa where they have got two classes, the privileged class and the unprivileged class. Here, in spite of the persistent demand by the minority for joint electorates, you are not agreeable to it. What is this all? Is it democracy or that that you are denying the

right to the people to exercise their own free-will. I say, they had not the moral courage to put down in writing that there shall be a joint electorate or separate electorate. They have not the courage to face the masses and therefore they want to hoodwink them. I know the views of the people in Bengal over this Constitution. I had been to Dacca recently.

My friends cannot dare to face the people of East Bengal. Though Mr. Fazlul Huq is considered to be a most popular man, yet he could not address the public meeting the other day at Dacca. Nobody could hear him, with the result that Mr. Fazlul Huq had to leave the place under the protection of armed police.

#### **THE IMAGE OF THE BENGALI: AYUB ON EAST BENGAL**

*[Extracts from 'Friends Not Masters': A Political Biography by Mohammad Ayub Khan, Oxford University Press, Karachi 1967]*

##### **The Early Experiences**

Khawaja Nazimuddin was the Chief Minister of the province when I went there as G.O.C. He was a pious man, with a long political record. But it was a torture for him to give a decision. I saw him in his office many times: I would see an impressive head behind a pile of papers which covered him up to the nose. It was commonly believed that the Chief Minister had a method of his own to deal with problems: any file requiring a decision was quietly pushed under the pile and there it remained till with the passage of time the problem solved itself...Hamidul Haq was known to be a clever man but there was a general impression that he was standing in the way of development as he was averse to any Muslim from outside East Pakistan coming into the province and setting up any industry. Discouraged, some who wanted to invest went back to India; others drifted to Karachi. Not, I should add, that it was easy to set up an in-

dustry: there was no power, no communications, and even land was difficult to get.

I could see that a mental barrier against outsiders was being erected. This proved a great deterrent to the movement of people and capital into East Pakistan. The attitude in West Pakistan was different: there was no emotional or political antipathy to the people coming from India. A large number of Muslim refugees from the United Provinces of India and Bombay and other Indian cities came to West Pakistan after independence and played a major part in its industrialization. Similarly, in the armed forces and in the civil services there were a number of refugees.

At the time of Independence there was only one East Pakistani officer in the Superior Civil Services. This necessitated posting officers from West Pakistan, or from amongst the refugees, to the provincial government. They came to be regarded as symbols of outside interference among the educated classes. The new middle class in the province began nursing a grievance against their West Pakistani compatriots. They found themselves lagging behind in respect of positions of authority, in jobs generally and in commercial fields in particular. The provincial leadership was faced with a difficult situation. They could face the problems squarely, identify the causes and work to create an adequate social and economic infra-structure, supported by corresponding educational and technical institutions, to prepare the youth of the province to compete with the rest of the country on merit. This required sober thinking and dedicated hard work, neither of which was forthcoming. The alternative was to build up political pressure and shift all the blame to West Pakistan. Some of the political agitators found this a much more convenient and popular course of action. Consequently, the political life of the province was given an agitational pattern and it worried and saddened me. I could see that some of the poli-

tical demagogues were going to exploit the emotions of the people.

I had a revealing encounter with Suhrawardy at that time which gave me an insight into his mind. There was a function at Curzon Hall in Dacca. Someone introduced me to Suhrawardy and this was the first time I met him. 'General', he addressed me with his characteristic flourish, 'they have issued an expulsion order. But they do not know that I can finish Nazimuddin in no time.' I said, 'Mr. Suhrawardy, why don't you leave East Pakistan alone? Haven't they got enough problems without your adding to them?' What he said in reply I cannot repeat because the man is dead, but it gave me sufficient indication of how he intended to exploit the situation in East Pakistan. Since he was a key figure in politics, I knew then that the agitational pressures which were being built up in the province were not going to subside in a hurry...

I was distressed that a population of such a large size should produce so few men of the requisite standard. I took up this matter with the provincial government and urged them to start good public schools where intelligent young men could be given the necessary training to build their mind, body, and character... Perhaps they thought that the general reaction to the establishment of public schools would not be favourable. I remember, for example, that an article was published in Maulana Akram Khan's newspaper, *Azad*, condemning the government for planning to start schools for the rich at the expense of the poor...

The thing that surprised me was the lack of manpower with qualities of leadership. The Army Selection Board would visit East Pakistan every six months. In the beginning for the first one or two terms the Board found four or five boys who could be accepted for the Army Military College. But they were mainly boys who had come from refugee families. When this material was exhausted they came to selection from amongst the local boys. The

Selection Board would then be lucky to get even one or two borderline cases. I would advise the Board to take them anyway because nobody would accept that the Board had been fair and objective and that the rules and specifications had been rigidly applied...

I could not quite understand whether the agitational pressure in East Pakistan was the result of a combination of little things, such as personal complaints and grievances, or the manifestation of some deeper malady. I often heard criticism of the conduct of West Pakistani civil servants serving in East Pakistan. They were accused of being exclusive and aggressive and their attitude was regarded as patronizing. I saw many of these officers at work in the province and I thought they worked very hard and were deeply interested in the welfare of the province. No doubt their manners and pattern of life were different; an average East Pakistani was inclined to misjudge and misunderstand them. It is quite common for a West Pakistani to answer a simple question with a grunt and not realize that he is being impolite.

It might well be that the mannerisms of the West Pakistani irritated the East Pakistani. I grew to like Bengali songs, though I have no real ear for music; they fascinate me. I told an East Pakistani friend once, 'you have such sweet music. I wish to God you were half as sweet yourself'... The trouble in the early days of independence was that there was very little social contact between East and West Pakistanis. The average West Pakistani found himself isolated and tended to form a group of his own. I would tell the West Pakistanis, 'Why don't you meet them? Ask them over and entertain them even if it is over a simple cup of tea. You will get to know each other at the human level and from that, friendship and warmth and understanding will develop.'

The West Pakistanis were no angels or missionaries. Most of them were government servants

who felt that they had been deprived of the comparative comforts of life available to them in West Pakistan. They all came from the middle class and had family commitments. Travel between the two wings of the country was difficult and expensive. Many used to be irritated by what they regarded as the general inefficiency of East Pakistan and never tried to make a secret of their unwillingness to serve there...

Trouble was brewing and finally broke out in Dacca on 13 July, 1948. I was on tour with Zakir Hussain who was then Inspector-General of Police. We were staying at a rest house in Mymensingh when I was rung up from Dacca and told that the police had surrounded Government House and the Chief Minister's house. Some of them had been seen in front of the Civil Secretariat. They had removed arms and ammunition from a magazine in the police lines and had taken up defensive positions. It was a peculiar situation: on the one hand I had to pacify the head of the police whose guest I was—and on the other, to deal with his mutineers. I told the Battalion Commander to give them a warning and prevent them from adopting a reckless course. The argument went on for hours but the police could not be persuaded to return to their lines. After some time the Battalion Commander rang me back to say that the mutineers were not responding to reason. Whenever an appeal was made to them, they would start abusing the army. We were left with no option but to take action. I told the Battalion Commander to take military action against the mutineers, using as little force as possible.

The defensive position which the police force had taken up was in the middle of the city and there was danger of members of the public getting injured by covering fire. We had no alternative but to attack the mutineers. A company of the 3rd/8th Punjab Regiment was detailed to deal with the

situation. They had to cover some three hundred yards of open ground to get on to the defensive position. They advanced quickly and occupied the position. One or two policemen, including the ring-leader, were killed and ten or twelve persons were injured. Luckily the trouble was quelled, the situation brought under control, and the chances of its spreading to the rest of the province were eliminated.

...Fazlul Haq came out along with Mohammad Ali of Bogra who was then in the Opposition, and they tried to work up the boys again. I tapped Mohammad Ali on the shoulder and said, 'Are you looking for a bullet?' He retorted, 'You are being rude.' I did not want the trouble to restart so I told him firmly to go home.

...I remember one day I was coming back to the High Court after an inspection. I found Fazlul Haq asking the students to lie flat on the ground to prevent the working of the Court. I looked out of my car and asked what it was all about. Fazlul Haq saw me and apparently decided that I looked dangerous. He quietly advised the boys to clear out. I must say life was not without its moments of excitement, and even amusement, in those days.

#### Thoughts of 1954

I was pacing up and down the room when I said to myself: 'Let me put down my ideas in a military fashion: what is wrong with the country and what can be done to put things right.' I approached the question much in the manner of drawing up a military appreciation; what is the problem, what are the factors involved, and what is the solution, if there is a solution? So I sat down at the desk in my room and started writing. In the beginning my mind was confused but soon everything stood out clearly. In a few hours I had produced a document which contained my thinking and set out my

approach to the problems facing the country. I came to the conclusion that the affairs of the country, though in a desperate state, were not beyond redemption. This is how the document read:

The people of Pakistan consist of a variety of races each with its own historical background and culture. East Bengalis, who constitute the bulk of the population, probably belong to the very original Indian races. It would be no exaggeration to say that up to the creation of Pakistan, they had not known any real freedom or sovereignty. They have been in turn ruled either by the caste Hindus, Moghuls, Pathans, or the British. In addition, they have been and still are under considerable Hindu cultural and linguistic influence. As such they have all the inhibitions of down-trodden races and have not yet found it possible to adjust psychologically to the requirements of the new-born freedom. Their popular complexes, exclusiveness, suspicion and a sort of defensive aggressiveness probably emerge from this historical background. Prudence, therefore, demands that these factors should be recognized and catered for and they be helped so as to feel equal partners and prove an asset. That can be done only if they are given a considerable measure of partnership.

#### On Disparity

...I must refer to a phenomenon which has been the cause of considerable tension and misunderstanding between the two Provinces. This is the slogan of 'disparity', which has assumed considerable social significance and usually refers to an assumed lack of equality between the two Provinces of the country. It is a much abused word and covers a wide variety of complaints and grievances, very often of a personal character. If a candidate does not have the requisite qualifications and is, therefore, not selected

for a job, he dubs it 'disparity'.... The politician has seized on his general impatience for a personal advancement and turned it into a popular political slogan. He bases his whole campaign against the central government and West Pakistan on disparity.

Now disparity is recognized by all and so is the need to remove disparity. What is not realized is that 'disparity' is a phase in the process of development...

When the younger generation in East Pakistan is reminded of these facts they feel that past history is being used to explain away their present difficulties. They are encouraged to demand that progress in other parts of the country should be stopped till their Province comes up to the same level. Now they forget that the urge for advancement which inspires them is shared equally fervently by people in other parts of the country.

It is inconceivable that any government should be able to compel people in one region to work at less than their capacity till others build up an equal capacity. It should be the aim of a Welfare State to narrow down the gaps and eliminate imbalance, but the only way to do it is by providing greater incentives to less developed areas rather than by denying existing incentives to the relatively developed ones. It would be a futile and self-defeating policy to bring about uniformity by lowering levels of progress all round.

...In the political sphere, East Pakistan has equal representation with West Pakistan in the National Assembly and in the President's Council of Ministers. But parity in terms of uniform economic progress requires more than constitutional provisions. While the government recognizes the principle of parity, the people, too, have to discharge their responsibility. It is not enough to claim parity of resources and parity of opportunities; it is equally important to recognize parity of endeavour. Equality in progress can be guaranteed only by equality in

effort. So the slogan of disparity should not be used as an excuse for personal inadequacies.

### Language Problem

The language problem has been a major hindrance in the development of a sound and uniform educational system in the country. The Commission advocated teaching through both the national languages, Bengali and Urdu, and referred also to the question of the two scripts but did not go into the difficulties which teaching in two languages and two scripts presents to a developing society seeking to build itself into a unified community professing a common ideology and committed to a common destiny. The language problem has to be viewed essentially as an academic and scientific problem. Unfortunately it has become a highly explosive political issue and the result is that no one wishes to talk about it for fear of being misunderstood. The intellectuals who should have been vitally interested in the matter have remained on the touch-line lacking the moral courage to face up to the problem. Their attitude has been to leave it to the political leaders to come up with some solution and face the odium, so that they may be able to sit back in comfort and criticize whatever solution is offered.

It is quite clear to me that with two national languages we cannot become a one-nation State; we shall continue to remain a multi-nation State. I am not necessarily arguing against this; I am just stating a fact of life which has to be recognized. For it is the case that one language cannot be imposed on the whole country; neither Bengali nor Urdu can become the language of the whole of Pakistan. It is equally true that if the people—both in East and West Pakistan—want to develop cohesion they must have a medium to communicate with each other. And this medium must be a national medium. To evolve such a medium we have to identify common elements in Bengali and Urdu and allow them to grow together through a common script.

Admittedly it will be a long process, but with growing understanding and knowledge of each other a national medium is bound to emerge and take shape.

### FOREIGN POLICY: THE OBSESSION WITH INDIA

*[Extracts from Z.A. Bhutto's speech in the Pakistan National Assembly, July 17, 1963]*

As I said in my opening remarks, the present threat to the national security and territorial integrity of Pakistan is by no means the first one in its experience. We have had to face crisis after crisis from the very day that our country came into existence, all because of India's unfortunate antagonism. The fact that India has been enabled by the Western Powers to augment its military strength to a most formidable extent has made the situation even more disturbing and dangerous. This augmentation is being brought about through the assistance principally of the United States of America and the United Kingdom, with both of whom we are associated in defence alliances. This is the new element which has been injected into the situation and which aggravates it.

During the last fifteen years, India has embarked on a course of aggression on no less than five occasions. This indeed is a record which any aggressor State, in the history of the world, might well envy. On a number of occasions, the Prime Minister of India, his cabinet colleagues, the Ministers of provincial governments in India and the leaders of political parties in that country have made statements naming Pakistan as India's Enemy Number One. This declaration of enmity was repeated even during the Sino-Indian fighting by officials and other responsible spokesmen of the Government of India. Such is the position which India has taken up in relation to Pakistan.

However, notwithstanding the professions of peaceful intent and of pacific policies by India, in actual fact, India is an aggressor State. Therefore, when India is



arming itself feverishly, as she is at present, we cannot look upon it with equanimity. The situation which has thus been created is a grave one. It poses for us a threat, to counter which we need all our resources and strength.

This situation is not of our making. On the contrary, we have been doing everything in our power to prevent the developments that have led to it. However, it was beyond our capacity to prevent them. In the Sino-Indian conflict are involved the two largest States of the East. We can do little to influence the course of the conflict between them much less to bring about its termination.

We have told the Western Powers repeatedly that the augmentation of India's military strength is directed principally against Pakistan, to whose separate existence as a nation India has not really reconciled itself. We have adduced proof of this fact by inviting attention to India's past conduct as an aggressor State and to the utterances of responsible Indian leaders, betraying their aggressive intentions towards our country. We have reminded the Western Powers of the fact that the history of the sub-continent over a period of more than eight hundred years is the history of conflict between its two major communities. That conflict which at times took the form of war has continued after the partition. The Kashmir dispute has magnified it and aggravated the mutual suspicions and fears which bedevil relations between Pakistan and India.

Unfortunately, we and the Western Powers proceed on different basic assumptions. Their assumption is that, in the twentieth century, a State like India cannot embark on aggression against Pakistan and that the United Nations is there to prevent aggression and to cope with war-like crises anywhere in the world. The Western Powers also claim that they themselves can control the use of the arms given by them to India, so that they are not used

against Pakistan. Further, they have given us an assurance to the effect that if India embarks on aggression against us, they will come to our assistance. They consider that the Government and the people of Pakistan should be satisfied with this assurance as a guarantee of this country's security and independence.

We think otherwise. In the first place, history gives abundant proof of the fact that in any given situation it is difficult to determine who the aggressor is. It will be even more difficult now if modern weapons are used. It will not be possible to prove which party committed the first act that is to be classed as aggression, which party was the first to fire the shot and whether the first shot was fired in aggression or in self-defence. The United Nations, and the International Law Commission and, before them, the League of Nations, were seized with the problem of defining aggression. But no definition of it has yet been found. There is nothing more important for a sovereign State than actually to prevent aggression against itself, for after one's homes and cities have been destroyed, there is not much that can be done about it. The augmentation of India's military strength through the United States and the United Kingdom aid has given rise to a situation in which the threat to our security is being menacingly intensified and compounded.

Furthermore, India is in a position to sell its own products for money and with that money to purchase armaments from countries other than the United States and the United Kingdom. This in itself is a cause of alarm for Pakistan. And, of course, there are India's own resources of arms and the substantial military assistance it is receiving from the Soviet Union. It is poor consolation to be told that if aggression is committed against Pakistan by India, the United States will come to Pakistan's assistance. But after aggression has taken place, with its concomitant loss of life and

destruction of property, that will be meaningless.

The same assurance was given to India when the United States embarked on an arms aid programme to Pakistan. It might be recalled that at that time, the boot was on India's leg, and India had put forward the same arguments to discount the assurance that the United States would come to its assistance if it were attacked by Pakistan. But the assurance given to Pakistan is different in one sense. This difference arises from the fact that Pakistan is in every respect a far smaller country than India. Even if we make every possible sacrifice, with our resources and with the aid that we might get, we would still not be able to match India's resources or India's intrinsic strength. The best we could do would be to try and maintain some sort of a precarious balance. The reason is that India has over four times of Pakistan's population territory, economic wealth and technical skill. Therefore, while the assurance given to India by the United States was quite superfluous, that given to Pakistan is of little or no value in a situation in which our security is in jeopardy.

The point of view which represents our genuine apprehension, has been made fully known both to the United States and the United Kingdom. They, however, feel that their global interests and policies require the containment of international communism. They argue that these same considerations formed the basis of western economic and military assistance to Pakistan. In view of their global policy and their belief that there is a real threat to India, they regard it as necessary for them to give military assistance to India. They even claim that had it not been for Pakistan's objections and fears, their assistance to India would have been on a much larger scale. As it is, they say, the aid given to India is limited in quantity and defensive in character.

The agreement reached at Nassau was to the effect that the United States and the United



Kingdom would offer military assistance to India of the value of 120 million dollars. A few months later, on 30th June, a joint communique was issued by President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan announcing their further decision to give long term military assistance to India over and above that which had already been provided for under the Nassau Agreement. We are not yet in a position to inform the House about the exact scope and nature of this latest agreement, for its terms have not been disclosed to us. When they are, we shall, should the need and the opportunity for it arise during the session, announce them in the House, or inform the nation of them through the Press.

I have stated that in spite of our best efforts, we have not been able to dissuade the United States and the United Kingdom from taking the decision to give long term military assistance to India. It may be that under that decision the aid will be limited in quantity or that it will be of a defensive character. However, let me say that we find no satisfaction in the assurance that the aid will be of a limited, controllable and defensive character, for we know that these are fatuous qualifications. In practical and pragmatic terms, they are meaningless.

This being the position, how then can Pakistan safeguard its independence and territorial integrity? We have been told that in the twentieth century it is not possible for a State to embark on naked aggression against another, such as ours, with its population of one hundred million. We have replied that this argument is not a tenable one. Even if it be assumed that India will not be in a position to embark on wholesale aggression against Pakistan, the situation between the two countries will still further deteriorate, for India will have been put in such a position as to be able to dictate to a neighbouring country from a position of strength.

India's bargaining position will thus be artificially increased to such an extent as will preclude,

for all time, the possibility of its agreeing to a settlement on any except its own inequitable terms with a country which is militarily its inferior. The issue thus is not only that India is receiving military assistance, which may be used against Pakistan, but also that the augmentation of India's military strength invests it with a most dangerous power of dictating its own terms in its disputes with other States. That too is a matter which we have to consider very seriously. Time is running out. With the passage of time, as the military and economic strength of India increases, the possibilities of its agreeing to a peaceful and reasonable settlement of our outstanding disputes with it are correspondingly reduced. . .

India did not really fear Chinese aggression, for it knew, as did the rest of us, that the conflict with China was no more than a border clash, brought about by India's own impetuosity. That being the position, what India really wanted was to augment its military strength and potential to be directed, not so much against Communist China, as against the country which it had declared to be its Enemy Number One. Today we are faced with a delicate situation which might lead us to the threshold of a new phase of our national history. This situation is engaging the most serious attention of the Government. This much we know and can say that if, God forbid, we should be involved in a clash with India, that is if India were in its frustration, to turn its guns against Pakistan, the international position being what it is, Pakistan would not be alone.

The conflict would not involve Pakistan only. An attack by India on Pakistan would no longer confine the stakes to the independence and territorial integrity of Pakistan. An attack by India on Pakistan would also involve the security and territorial integrity of the largest State in Asia. This new factor that has arisen is a very important one. I would not, at this

stage, wish to elucidate it any further. It would suffice to say that the national interests of another State would be involved in an Indian attack on Pakistan because that State and other States know about India's aggressive intentions and know that India is capable of embarking on aggression against other countries. Therefore, a defeated Pakistan or a subjugated Pakistan would not only mean annihilation for us but also pose a serious threat to other countries of Asia and particularly to the largest State of Asia. From that point of view and as a result of the other international factors that have recently come into operation, I think I can confidently say that everything is being done by the Government to see that our national interests and territorial integrity are safeguarded and protected.

At the same time, I would like to say that in spite of the grave crisis that we face, we should not feel alarmed to the point of permitting any sort of moral imbalance to develop in our national life. Our people will face the present crisis, as they have faced all crisis in the past, with calmness and dignity. . .

The question now is that of maintaining a military balance between Pakistan and India in order to prevent a conflict in the sub-continent. In view of the arms build-up in India, it becomes incumbent upon Pakistan to increase its own military strength. The argument that the United States does not give military assistance to Pakistan to be used against India is no longer valid. If military assistance to India is controllable, so that it cannot be used against Pakistan, further augmentation of Pakistan's military strength, in order to assure a balance, need not be regarded as directed against India, for additional military assistance to Pakistan should also be capable of being controlled. It is imperative that in the interest of peace there should be a military balance between India and Pakistan and an assurance that this balance will not be upset so that neither State

becomes capable of embarking on aggression against the other. . .

The members of the House also wish to be informed about the boundary agreement with China. On that matter, I beg to submit that in December 1960 we had decided to make a proposal to China for the demarcation of our undefined boundary with it. In February 1961, we entered into negotiations with that country. In March 1961 we made to it a formal request for a boundary agreement.

As a result, some preliminary exchanges of views on the subject took place, but no substantial progress was made. At that time India contended with the People's Republic of China that Pakistan had no right to negotiate for that part of Kashmir, which, though under Pakistan's physical control, was a part of the territory of the State of Jammu & Kashmir and legally a part of India, and that India was the only sovereign authority to negotiate a settlement of the boundary in question.

In support of this contention, India tried to muster the assistance of the Soviet Union and some other powers. However, in spite of Indian demarches, our negotiations with China made satisfactory progress. The Sino-Indian conflict gave a fresh impetus to these negotiations. You can well understand the reason for it. No State would care to be confronted at the same time with problems or unresolved situations on two fronts. Be that as it may, we were the gainers by entering into negotiations to delimit our boundary with China. We saw no reason to delay the conclusion of an agreement about it, for we ourselves had initiated the negotiations. The late Mr. Mohammed Ali of Bogra was to go to the People's Republic of China to conclude the agreement. Most unfortunately, he did not live to do so, and I had to go in his place. We came to a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the boundary. Under this settlement, Pakistan gained about 750 square miles of territory, some of it rich in natural resources, particularly the salt mines of Oprang, which

the people of Hunza and the surrounding territory consider necessary for their needs and for their economic well being. It is a matter of the greatest importance that through this agreement we have removed any possibility of friction on our only common border with the People's Republic of China. We have eliminated what might well have become a source of misunderstanding and of future troubles. . .

I said that we had gained 750 square miles of territory from the People's Republic of China. Has that not been a real gain for us? And China, too, did not lose on the whole. In fact, it gained in the sense that it came to a settlement over the question of the boundary with Pakistan, hitherto an undefined boundary. The settlement laid the foundation for normal and good neighbourly relations. After all what is our objective? If the objective is to seek the good of the world at large, then it can be achieved only through such settlements as the one we have arrived at with China. Our aim is to have the most friendly and peaceful relations with as many countries as possible. I am happy to be able to say that our endeavours in pursuit of that aim have yielded good results. We have arrived at the boundary settlement with the People's Republic of China, so that we should have a peaceful and harmonious relationship with that great country and that there should be no cause for misunderstanding or friction over our common boundary. We have resumed diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, a Muslim country, so that we should be able to live with it in peace, amity and good neighbourliness. We have settled outstanding issues with Iran, the country with whom we have always had the friendliest of relations. We have sorted out our differences with Burma and it is hoped that, before the end of the year, the President of the Revolutionary Council of Burma will visit Pakistan. We have greatly improved our relations with Nepal, a fact highlighted by the visit of our President to that coun-

try. We recently had the honour of having the President of Indonesia in our midst. This has been most satisfactory in that it has led to the consolidation of our relations with Indonesia, a Muslim country of a hundred million people. With Ceylon, too, we have good, friendly relations. On the invitation of its Government, our President will pay a visit to Ceylon this year. With the Philippines and Thailand, which are our allies, we have the most amicable and cordial relations.

Thus, we are on good terms with all our neighbours, near or distant, except India. India is on bad terms not only with us but also with almost all its other neighbours. The arrogant attitude of the Government of India and its refusal to adopt a spirit of conciliation in its dealings with neighbouring countries has brought about a situation which is most unfortunate and undesirable for Pakistan as well as for other countries. I would not like to name those countries. They are known to the members of the House. We know what kind of relations India has with its neighbour Pakistan, its neighbour the People's Republic of China and its other neighbours. The whole world knows it. How is it that all countries, except India, can, on a basis of mutual understanding, achieve a settlement of their differences with others? Why cannot India? That country stands out as the great exception amongst those that are seeking to bring about understanding, tranquillity and peace in this region and in the world.

Recently, there have been negotiations for an Air Service Agreement between Pakistan and China. There have been references to this matter in the press. This Agreement is likely to be of great commercial importance for us. It will reduce the air distance between Pakistan and Japan by three to four hours. Correspondingly, it will also reduce the distance of flights from other parts of the world passing through Pakistan to Tokyo.

In order to be able to extend PIA services to Tokyo, we had

asked for landing rights in Hong Kong. Unfortunately these rights were not granted to us. We had, therefore, to ask for landing rights in the territory of the People's Republic of China. Those rights having been granted, we should now be able to take our air network around the world. I should mention for the information of the House that other countries have also asked for transit rights through the People's Republic of China for their airlines and are ready to negotiate with it for them...

As far as the question of Kashmir is concerned, it remains the most important, indeed, the basic issue in Pakistan's foreign policy. This issue is responsible for the great gulf that divides us and India. It constitutes a grave problem for the world. Although we have a great stake in it, the stake of the Kashmiris is the greatest of all. It is nothing short of a tragedy that they are being denied their right of self-determination. In fact they are the only people in this region who still suffer under a colonial regime and an oppressive regime at that. Today, the people of Kashmir are being called upon to contribute to the war effort of India. They have no concern at all with the so-called threat to India or with the armed conflict in which India is involved. Kashmir is not a part of India...

#### A MEDIATOR BETWEEN US & CHINA: BHUTTO'S DREAM

[Extract from a speech dated 21 August, 1964]

Nothing will give us greater satisfaction than to see the eventual, I would not call it a settlement but a recognition, of the realities of the situation as between the United States and China. A breakthrough in the difficult, though somewhat artificial situation, between those two great powers is urgently called for. If it could come, that would be the most important single factor conducive to international peace and security. In the realisation of this objective, Pakistan will be ready to play whatever modest

role it can. We are not saying this in a spirit of presumption. We know that world conditions require that at a certain stage there must be some relaxation in the tension between the United States and China. The present situation cannot last for long. Because of the impasse between them, the people of the United States and the people of China are the losers and, indeed, the people of the whole world. The forces of history and the compulsion of events are bound to move irresistibly. It is wrong to say that a *detente* or good relations between the Soviet Union and the United States are in the interest of world peace and at the same time to maintain that the isolation of China is in the interest of world peace. These double standards are abnoxious and cannot be applied to diplomacy in this second half of the twentieth century. We hope that slowly the force of reason and the processes of negotiation and accommodation will bring themselves to bear upon and lead to an improvement in China-United States relations. I repeat, we will be willing to undertake whatever limited role we can play in this matter.

nature should be understood and its causes identified. Nothing would be more catastrophic than the failure to come to grips with the basic issues which underlie the upheaval which has taken place in the country. These issues have been evaded for twenty-one years. The moment has arrived for us to face them squarely. I am convinced that a comprehensive solution must be found for our problems. What is at stake is our survival.

It is this conviction that obliges me to expound a comprehensive solution to our basic problems. If the demands that have been expressed by different sections of the people are carefully examined, it will be seen that there are three basic issues which underlie them.

The first is that of the deprivation of political rights and civil liberties.

The second is the economic injustice suffered by a vast majority of the people, comprising workers, peasants, low and middle income groups, who have had to bear the burden of the costs of development in the form of increasing inflation while the benefits of such development are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few families, who in their turn were concentrated in one region.

The third is the sense of injustice felt by the people of East Pakistan who find that under the existing constitutional arrangements their basic interests have consistently suffered in the absence of effective political power being conferred upon them. The former minority provinces of West Pakistan feel similarly aggrieved by the present constitutional arrangement.

The issue of deprivation of political rights finds expression in the 11-Point Programme of the students of East Pakistan, as also in the 6-Point Programme of the Awami League, as a demand for the establishment of a parliamentary democracy, based on the principle of the supremacy of the legislature, in which there is representation of all units on the basis of population, and to which

## Towards elections

#### THE SOLUTION OF ILLS : MUJIBUR RAHMAN

(Text of Mujibur Rahman's statement at the Round Table Conference in Rawalpindi, 10 March, 1969)

The nation today is experiencing a crisis which has shaken its very foundations. For all of us who love the nation and recall the sacrifices which were made to create Pakistan, this is a time of grave anxiety. In order to resolve the crisis, it is imperative that its

representatives are directly elected by the people on the basis of universal adult franchise.

The issue of economic injustice is reflected in the 11-Point Programme in the form of clearly formulated demands for re-organisation of the economic and education system of the country. The 6-Point Programme of my party clearly recognises the need for radical economic re-organisation, and the demand for regional autonomy, as outlined in it, is insisted upon as an essential precondition for economic re-organisation and the implementation of effective economic programmes.

The issue of justice for the different regions and units of Pakistan is the basis of the demand for the establishment of a federation providing for full regional autonomy, as embodied in the 6-Point Programme as also in the 11-Point Programme: this is also the basis of the demand for dismemberment of One-Unit and the establishment of a sub-federation in West Pakistan.

The Democratic Action Committee has held detailed deliberations regarding these grave and challenging national issues. There has always been complete unanimity in the Democratic Action Committee on the imperative necessity of effecting the following constitutional changes;

- (a) The establishment of a federal parliamentary democracy,
- (b) The introduction of a system of direct elections based on universal adult franchise.

A consensus has also been apparent among the members of the committee on the following matters:

- (a) The dismemberment of One-Unit and the establishment of a sub-federation in West Pakistan,
- (b) Full regional autonomy being granted to the region.

The committee further agreed that its members should be at liberty to present further propo-

sals, which in their view were essential for achieving an effective and lasting solution of the problems that are at the root of the present crisis.

Since we are here for the very purpose of seeking to find such an effective and lasting solution, I have felt it my bounden duty to press before this conference with all earnestness that everyone sitting at this table should realise that constitutional changes to provide representation on the basis of population in the federal legislature as well as for the granting of full regional autonomy, as outlined in the 6-Point Programme, are essential for achieving a strong, united, and vigorous Pakistan.

I would like to state that the Awami League is a party of the freedom fighters for Pakistan. Its founder, H. S. Suhrawardy, is indeed one of the founders of Pakistan. I recall with some pride that, under his leadership my colleagues and I were in the vanguard of the struggle for Pakistan. Such proposals as I am presenting before the conference are based on the conviction that they are absolutely essential in order to persevere and indeed to strengthen Pakistan.

The demand for representation in the federal legislature to be on the basis of population stems from the first principle of democracy, viz. one man, one vote. In the national forum, as envisaged in the six-point scheme, only national issues would arise for consideration. The representatives would, therefore, be called upon to deal with matters from a national point of view, and hence the voting would not be on a regional basis. Further, national political parties would be represented in the federal legislature which would ensure that voting would be on a party, and not on a regional basis. Indeed the experience of the last twenty-one years bears out the fact that voting in the national assembly has invariably been on a party basis.

It is the principle of parity in representation of each Wing

which is based on the false premise that representatives in the federal legislature are likely to vote on a regional basis. It is thus the parity principle that places an unjustified emphasis on regionalism as a factor in national politics. The entire historical experience of the last 21 years fully bears out the fact that East Pakistan has always subordinated its regional interest to the over-riding national interest, notwithstanding the fact that it had the majority of the population.

It should not be necessary to recall that in the first Constituent Assembly East Pakistan had 44 representatives as against 28 from West Pakistan, yet this majority was never used to promote any regional interest. Indeed, six West Pakistanis were elected to the Constituent Assembly from East Pakistan.

Despite being in a majority, East Pakistan accepted the principle of parity not only in representation in the legislature but also in other organs of the State. It is painful to record that parity. So far as representation in the legislature was concerned, this was promptly implemented, but the benefit of parity in representation in the other organs of the State including the Civil, Foreign and Defence Services was never extended to East Pakistan.

East Pakistan had even acquiesced in the federal capital as well as all the defence headquarters being located in West Pakistan. This meant that the bulk of the expenditure on defence and civil administration, amounting to about Rs. 270 crores, or over 70 per cent of the Central Budget, is made in West Pakistan. Should our West Pakistani brethren persist in refusing us representation on a population basis in the federal legislature, East Pakistanis will feel constrained to insist on the shifting of the federal capital and the defence headquarters to East Pakistan.

It would be a positive step cementing the relations between the two wings of Pakistan if our West Pakistani brethren were to

affirm their confidence in the federal legislature on the basis of population. Such a step would pay rich dividends by way of building up mutual confidence and trust between the people of East and West Pakistan.

The adoption of the federal scheme presented in the 6-Point Programme is an essential prerequisite for the achievement of a political solution for the problems of the country. I would reiterate that the spirit underlying the 6-Point Programme is that Pakistan should present itself to the community of the nations as one single united nation of one hundred and twenty million people. This object is served by the federal government being entrusted with the three subjects of defence, foreign affairs, and currency. It is the same objective of the facts of geography by granting full regional autonomy to the regions in order to enable them to have complete control in all matters relating to economic management.

I cannot too strongly emphasise the imperative necessity of removing economic injustice, if we are to put our society back on an even keel. The 11-Point Programme of the students for which I have expressed support contains proposals regarding the re-ordering of the economic and educational system. Their demands stem from the basic urge for the attainment of economic justice.

I would, however, like at this time to confine myself to outlining the constitutional changes which are necessary for the attainment of economic justice between man and man and between region and region.

The centralisation of economic management has steadily aggravated the existing economic injustice to the point of crisis. I need hardly dilate on the subject of the 22 families who have already achieved considerable notoriety both at home and abroad on account of concentration of wealth in their hands resulting from their ready access to the corridors of power. Monopolies and cartels

have been created and a capitalist system has been promoted, in which the gulf between the privileged few and the suffering multitude of workers and peasants has been greatly widened. Gross injustices have also been inflicted on East Pakistan and the minority provinces of West Pakistan.

The existence of per capita income disparity between East and West Pakistan is known to all. As early as 1960, the Chief Economist of the Planning Commission estimated that the real per capita income disparity between East and West Pakistan was 60%.

The mid-plan review made by the Planning Commission and other recent documents show that the disparity in real per capita income has been steadily increasing, and therefore, would be much higher than 60 per cent today. Underlying such disparity is the disparity in the general economic structure and infrastructure of the two regions in the rates of employment, in facilities for education, in medical and welfare services. To give just a few examples, power-generating capacity in West Pakistan is 5 to 6 times higher than in East Pakistan, the number of hospital beds in 1966 in West Pakistan was estimated to be 28,200, while in East Pakistan was estimated to be 6,900 during 1961-66, only 18 polytechnic institutes were established in East Pakistan as against 48 being established in West Pakistan.

Further, the disparity in the total availability of resources has been even higher. More than 80 per cent of all foreign aid has been utilised in West Pakistan in addition to the transfer of East Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings to West Pakistan. This made it possible for West Pakistan over 20 years to import Rs. 3,109 crores worth of goods against the total export earnings of Rs. 1,337 crores, while during the same period East Pakistan imported Rs. 1,210 crores worth of goods as against its total export earnings of Rs. 1,650 crores. All these facts underline the gross economic injustice which has been done to

East Pakistan. There has been a failure to discharge the constitutional obligation to remove disparity between the provinces in the shortest possible time. The annual report on disparity for the year 1968 placed before the National Assembly reports that disparity has continued to increase.

The centralisation of economic management has thus failed miserably to meet the objective of attaining economic justice. It has failed to meet the constitutional obligation to remove economic disparity between region and region. Instead, therefore, of persisting in centralised, economic management which has failed to deliver the goods, we should adopt a bold and imaginative solution to this challenging problem. The federal scheme of the 6-Point Programme, in my view, such a bold and imaginative solution.

It is the quintessence of a scheme for the responsibility for economic management to the regions. This proposal is born of the conviction that this alone can effectively meet the problems, which centralised economic management has failed to overcome. The unique geography of the country resulting in lack of labour mobility, as well as the different levels of development obtaining in the different regions, require that economic management should not be centralised.

The specific proposals embodied in the 6-Point Programme with regard to currency, foreign trade, foreign exchange earnings, and taxation are all designed to give full responsibility for economic management to the regional government. The proposals with regard to currency are designed to prevent flight of capital and to secure control over monetary policy. The proposal regarding foreign trade and foreign exchange are demanded to ensure that the resources of a region are available to that region and to ensure that it obtain the maximum amount of foreign exchange resources for development purposes. The proposal regarding taxation is designed to ensure control by the regional governments over

fiscal policy, without in any way depriving the federal government of its revenue requirements.

The substance of these proposals are as follows:

- (a) With regard to currency, measures should be adopted to prevent flight of capital from one region to another and to secure control over monetary policy by the regional government. This can be done by the adopting of two currencies or by having one currency with a separate Reserve Bank being set up in each region, to control monetary policy, with the State Bank retaining control over certain defined matters. Subject to the above arrangements, currency would be a federal subject.
- (b) With regard to foreign trade and aid, the regional governments should have power to negotiate trade and aid within the framework of the foreign policy of the country, which shall be the responsibility of the federal ministry of foreign affairs.
- (c) The foreign exchange earnings of each region should be maintained in account in each regional Reserve Bank and be under the control of the regional governments, the federal requirements of foreign exchange would be met by appropriations from the two regional accounts on the basis of an agreed ratio.
- (d) With regard to taxation, it is proposed that the power of tax levy and collection should be left to the regional governments, but the federal government should be empowered to realise its revenue requirements from levies on the regional governments. It should be clearly understood that it is not at all contemplated that the federal government should be at the mercy of the regional government for its revenue needs.

I would emphasize that there would be no difficulty in devising

appropriate constitutional provisions whereby the federal government's revenue requirements could be met, consistently with the objective of ensuring control over fiscal policy by the regional governments. The scheme also envisages that there would be just representation on a population basis of persons from each part of Pakistan in all federal services, including defence services.

If these principles are accepted, the detailed provision can be worked out by a committee consisting of experts, to be designated by both parties.

This scheme holds enormous promise of removing the canker of economic injustice from the body-politic of Pakistan, while at the same time removing the mistrust and frustration which centralised economic management has fostered over the years.

I am confident that the people of West Pakistan would give their whole-hearted support to this scheme.

I urge the participants in this conference to come forward with open minds and with large hearts, in a spirit of fraternity and national solidarity, to adopt the federal scheme presented above, as the only means of overcoming what has been one of the most formidable problems confronting the country, i.e., that of the attainment of economic justice. No source has fed the current crisis more than the sense of economic injustice. Let us remove it, let us tackle problems at their source. Any attempt to avoid coming to grips with these basic problems will jeopardise our very survival.

Neither Almighty Allah nor history will forgive us if at this time of national crisis we fail to rise to the occasion and to adopt bold solutions in order to restore the formidable problems which have created a national crisis. This is a great opportunity, and one which may not present itself again, to face our national problems squarely. We must, therefore, strain every nerve to agree upon and implement the required solutions. Let us strive together

to lift our beloved Pakistan out of the tragic situation in which she is placed, and to lay the constitutional foundations for a real living, federal parliamentary democracy, which will secure for the people of Pakistan full political, economic, and social justice. Only thus strong and united, Pakistan can face the future with hope and confidence.

'Pakistan zindabad'.

## PROMISE OF TRANSFER OF POWER: YAHYA KHAN

(Broadcast by President Yahya Khan, 28 March, 1970)

In my address to the nation on November 28 last, I had, as you know, given out a plan for the transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people and had indicated certain major policy decisions that I had taken.

It is a matter of great personal satisfaction to me that the plan that I had laid before the nation was accepted by the people in every part of the country with great enthusiasm. This fact reaffirmed my assumption that the proposals outlined by me were based on popular wish. Let me now apprise you of the progress that has been made towards the achievement of the various objectives mentioned in the plan.

The Committee appointed for the purpose of working out the details of the dissolution of one unit has completed its draft action plan and has submitted its proposals with regard to financial and administrative arrangements.

A President's order setting out all the relevant details will be published shortly.

The provincial administration of each new province of West Pakistan will be in position soon and will become fully operative by the 1st of July 1970, which is the commencement of the new financial year.

Thereafter, West Pakistan will revert as closely to the pre-one unit position as possible.

The arrangements for the holding of elections are going according

to plan and the Chief Election Commissioner has kept you informed of developments from time to time. I foresee no difficulty whatsoever in keeping to the date that I had indicated in my last address.

The Legal Framework Order 1970 will be published on the 30th of this month (March, 1970). This order will form the main base for the operation of the National Assembly in their task of constitution-making. I might at this stage mention some of the salient features of this order which has been formulated as a result of my assessment of the wishes of the people.

The National Assembly will consist of a total of 313 members. Of these, 13 seats will be reserved for women. The allocation of seats to various provinces will be based on the population as recorded in the census of 1961 which is the latest official record available to the Government.

The order also provides for the holding of elections to the Provincial Assemblies.

At one stage, when plans for the transfer of power were being formulated, our thinking was that election to the Provincial Assemblies should be held after the constitution is finalised. The question was further examined in greater detail by my Government and we have come to the conclusion that politically it will be in the country's interest to hold the provincial elections soon after the elections to the National Assembly.

The main reason for this is that it will facilitate and speed up the transfer of power to the elected representatives as soon as the constitution is finalised. Further, it will relieve the politicians and their parties from a new election campaign immediately after the business of constitution-making is over. I consider that once the constitutional issues are settled, our leaders should address themselves to the major nation-building tasks rather than entering into a fresh round of electioneering.

Taking all these factors into consideration, I have decided that

provincial elections will be held not later than October 22, 1970. The Provincial Assemblies would, however, start functioning, when duly summoned, after the constitution has been framed and authenticated by me.

When the Legal Framework Order 1970 is published you will notice that in the schedule dealing with the Rules of Procedure, the voting procedure for the National Assembly has not been included. This is a matter which is best settled by the house itself and it is my earnest hope that there would not be too much divergence in views on this issue. Unanimity would of course be ideal. In any case I do not personally like to talk on this subject on the basis of percentages.

The point that I made earlier and would like to emphasise again is that a constitution is not an ordinary piece of legislation but it is an agreement to live together. It is therefore essential that all regions are reasonably satisfied with the voting procedure that may be evolved by the house because unless they are so satisfied, the constitution will not readily and genuinely be acceptable to the people of different provinces and regions as such a document should be. I am sure it should be possible to arrive at some suitable arrangement.

The Legal Framework Order does not only state how the Assembly will come into being, what its strength would be and such other matters relating to the setting up of this Assembly, but it also lays down certain basic principles for the future constitution of Pakistan. Most of these principles are based on previous constitutions but I thought it necessary to highlight some of these in the Order so that the Assembly makes a constitution which is acceptable to highlight some of these in the whole.

Firstly, the Order lays down that the constitution of Pakistan must preserve Islamic ideology

which, as we all know, was the basis of the creation of Pakistan.

Secondly, the constitution must ensure independence, territorial integrity and national solidarity of Pakistan. In order to attain these objectives it has been laid down in the Legal Framework Order that the territories now and hereafter included in Pakistan must be united in a federal union which must preserve the territorial unity of the State of Pakistan which will be called the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The third fundamental principle of the future constitution is that it must be a democratic one in which such basic ingredients of democracy as free and periodical elections on the basis of population and direct adult franchise are included. Further, the constitution must include the independence of the judiciary, and the fundamental rights of the citizens.

The fourth basic principle of the new constitution is that it must be a true federal one in which powers including legislative, administrative and financial shall be so distributed between the Federal Government and the provinces that the provinces shall have maximum autonomy, that is to say, maximum legislative, administrative and financial powers, and the Federal Government shall have adequate powers including legislative, administrative and financial powers to discharge its responsibilities in relation to external and internal affairs and to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of the country.

The fifth principle of the constitution is that it must provide full opportunity to the people of all regions of Pakistan for participation in national affairs so that they can live together as equal and honourable partners and be moulded into a strong nation as visualised by the Father of the Nation, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

It is therefore, laid down in the Legal Framework Order that opportunities must be made available to the people of various re-



gions of Pakistan for enabling them to participate in all the branches of national activity, and to achieve this objective there must be statutory provision to remove all disparities, in particular economic disparity, among the various provinces of Pakistan within a fixed period.

The dissatisfaction which has arisen in some regions of the country as a result of disparity in economic development has created a big challenge to our emerging nationalism. We must, therefore, concentrate our attention and energy to remove this sort of discontentment by eliminating its cause.

I hope all of you will agree with me that while in the future National Government people of every region must have the fullest opportunity to play their part in national affairs, the unity and integrity of Pakistan must be preserved, and must not be allowed to be adversely affected on regional and parochial grounds.

Pakistan was established on the basis of the idea of one homeland for the Muslims of this subcontinent. It was achieved at the cost of the lives of a million Muslims. We cannot allow that sacrifice to go in vain. The assertion of Quaid-i-Azam that 'Pakistan has come to stay' must be upheld at any cost. This is an assumption over which there can never be any debate.

I would like to offer my comments on a fear that has been expressed in certain quarters that it would not be possible for the National Assembly to make a constitution within the stipulated period of 120 days. I must express my complete disagreement with this point of view. I believe that given the will and spirit of accommodation which the nation has a right to expect from its responsible representatives, the National Assembly will find no difficulty in completing its task within the given time.

As we all know, the Members will have two or three drafts available to them for their consideration in the form of previous

constitutions. So it is not as if this Assembly will have to start from scratch.

The basic groundwork in respect of the preamble, the Directive Principles and many other matters, has already been done in the previous constitutions and most of it continues to apply. I may also add that I have done everything possible to facilitate and speed up the Assembly's work. Adult franchise, population basis and dismemberment of one unit are now settled issues. On the procedural side a complete set of Rules of Procedure will be included as a schedule in the Legal Framework Order.

It was against this background that my Government had carefully worked out a reasonable period for framing the constitution and we considered that 120 days would be quite adequate. Let us therefore eschew all further doubts and fears on this account.

In the end, my dear countrymen, I would like to say once again that it is my own and my Government's firm resolve to bring back democracy to our country. I need hardly say that in the achievement of this objective we expect full cooperation and unflinching support from every one of you. For without such cooperation and support our task will be made infinitely more difficult.

Our people are intensely patriotic. They will, therefore, tolerate most things except an act of sabotage against the integrity of Pakistan. If anyone thinks that he can let down the country and the people or entertain any ideas destroying the basic unity of our people, he is very much mistaken. The people will not stand for this.

As I said earlier, everyone has a right to offer his solution to the constitutional, political, economic and administrative problems of the country, but no one has a right to offer a solution which would adversely affect the solidarity of the people of Pakistan. This no one would tolerate. We will refuse to be silent spectators

to any attacks against Pakistan's entity as a nation.

Major changes cannot be brought about without courage and patriotism of the highest order on the part of the whole nation. The country is passing through a phase when personal and all other considerations must be sacrificed for the bigger cause—the cause of Pakistan.

Let me assure you that I have not the slightest doubt that by the grace of Almighty God, we shall overcome our present difficulties.

#### A MOST SOLEMN PLEDGE: MUJIBUR RAHMAN

*(Election Broadcast by Mujibur Rahman, 28 October, 1970)*

My dear fellow citizens, brothers and sisters, assalam-o-alaikum:

I must begin by offering *monajat* for those heroic martyrs, who shed their blood and laid down their lives for the cause of the people. It is their sacrifices and that of countless thousands who have defied tyranny, in movement after movement leading upto last year's historic mass upsurge, that has carried the people's struggle forward. Indeed, even the fact that I am able to speak to you over the national radio and television network may be counted as one of the initial gains of the people's struggle, since until this time this privilege was monopolised by those in power.

Our struggle must go on. For the real goal lies ahead. Power has to be won by the people. The exploitation of man by man and of region by region must be brought to an end. The powerful coteries which have ruled Pakistan for 22 years, will do everything possible to prevent transfer of power to the people. It is they who are actively conspiring to frustrate the holding of the general elections, and even after elections, they will continue to obstruct every effort to end exploitation. They have money, they have influence, they have the capacity to use force against



the people. History however, testifies that determined people can successfully resist and overcome such forces of oppression.

The most solemn pledge that the Awami League can make to the people of Pakistan is that it shall stand by their side and indeed lead them in resisting the forces of oppression and exploitation. No people have secured freedom and justice unless they have been geared to die for it. We, therefore, serve notice upon the forces of reaction in our society that we, along with the people of Pakistan, will confront them and if democratic processes are obstructed, we shall resist them by every means possible.

The Awami League was born in adversity and has grown in adversity. Under our great leader, the late Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, we came into existence to defy the attempt of the ruling party to form a one-party State. We thus began a struggle to establish democracy in Pakistan. This struggle continues till this day. Our party has faced onslaught after onslaught from the ruling group. Our leadership and our workers have spent the better part of their lives in jails. We have faced and overcome every form of repression. It is this that gives us the courage and confidence today to commit ourselves to the task of confronting the anti-democratic forces.

To overcome the crisis that engulfs the nation, we must resolve those issues which are its cause. The first is the deprivation of political freedom. The second is the sense of economic injustice felt by the overwhelming multitudes of our people. The third is the deep sense of injustice created by widening economic disparity between the regions. It is this that underlies the anguish and the anger of the Bengali people. The same sentiment is reflected among the downtrodden people of the neglected areas of West Pakistan.

Our manifesto sets out a comprehensive strategy for resolving these fundamental issues. A real

living democracy must be established, in which all the fundamental freedoms shall be constitutionally guaranteed. Our manifesto outlines a framework for the healthy growth of political parties, trade unions and local self-government. We do pledge to restore complete freedom of the press and academic freedom and to eradicate corruption which has grown like a cancer in our society.

The present economic system, which has established an intolerable structure of injustice, must be radically altered.

Today, barely two dozen families have acquired control over 60 per cent of the nation's industrial assets; 80 per cent of its insurance assets. . . 82 per cent of the total bank advances are concentrated in only 3 per cent of the total accounts. The tax structure in existence is one of the most regressive in the world. Only 2 per cent of the GNP is being realised as direct taxes as against 6 per cent in other developing countries, while oppressive indirect taxes are imposed on such essential commodities as salt.

Protected markets, tax holidays, huge subsidies in the form of bonus vouchers, credits and grants of foreign exchange at the artificially-low official rate have created specially favourable conditions for the growth of monopolies and cartels.

Despite nominal land reforms, feudal lords have retained princely estates. They enjoy vast privileges and their prosperity increases while the lot of the poor peasants becomes more and more desperate. In a bid for survival, there is movement of people from the villages to the cities. According to official estimates 1/5th of the total labour force or about 90 lakhs people are unemployed. This alarming figure continues to grow. The industrial workers, are suffering the full impact of the sharp rise in the cost of living. The cost of living is increasing more rapidly than the increase in money wages. The impact of the

unending rise in the cost of living is also acutely felt by school and college teachers, low paid officers and employees, particularly the 4th grade employees of Government.

To turn now to the appalling record of economic disparity, it is seen that during the last 20 years out of the total revenue expenditure of the Government, only about Rs. 1,500 crores (that is only one-fifth of the total) was spent in Bengal, as against over Rs. 5,000 crores in West Pakistan. Of the total development expenditure during the same period, Rs. 3,000 crores (that is only one-third of the total) was spent in Bengal, as against over Rs. 6,000 crores in West Pakistan. Over 20 years, West Pakistan has imported goods worth more than Rs. 3,000 crores as against its own foreign exchange earnings of barely Rs. 1,300 crores. Imports into West Pakistan have been three times the value of the imports into Bengal.

It was made possible for West Pakistan to import goods worth Rs. 2,000 crores in excess of its export earnings by allocating to it Rs. 500 crores of the foreign exchange earnings of Bengal and allowing it to utilise over 80 per cent of all foreign aid.

The record in the field of Government services is just as deplorable. After 21 years Bengalis account for barely 15 per cent in Central Government Services and less than 10 per cent in the defence services.

The total economic impact of such discrimination has been that the economy of Bengal is today in a stage of imminent collapse. Near famine conditions are prevailing in the majority of the villages. Some 15 lakh tons of rice has had to be imported only to save the people from starvation.

While inflation has been mounting, those who are worse hit are the poor people of Bengal. The price of essential commodities has been 5 per cent to 1 per cent higher in Bengal than in West Pakistan; the average price of

coarse rice in Bengal is Rs. 45 to 50 per maund in West Pakistan and that of wheat is Rs. 30 to 35 per maund in East Bengal as against Rs. 15 to 20 per maund in West Pakistan. Mustard oil sells in East Bengal at Rs. 5 per seer as against Rs. 2.50 per seer in West Pakistan. The gold price is Rs. 135 to 140 per tola in Karachi as against Rs. 160 to 165 per tola at Dacca. Even a Customs barrier has been imposed against carrying gold from West Pakistan to Bengal.

This injustice is the product of the management of the economy for 22 years by the Central Government. The Central Government is incapable of redressing such injustices. This is borne out by the Fourth Five-Year Plan. The Fourth Plan allocations are a confession of the failure of the Central Government, however powerful it might be, to redress past injustices.

The Awami League's Six-Point Programme which is embodied in the 11-Point Programme presents a rational solution to this problem of regional injustice. With a central bureaucracy in which Bengalis account for barely 15 per cent and with the nature of the power structure being what it is, to expect justice from a centralised system of economic management would be to expect the impossible. Attempts to secure larger allocations by political representatives of Bengal and the other under-developed areas would only aggravate regional tensions and threaten the viability of the Federal Government. The only feasible solution is the re-ordering of the constitutional structure by giving full regional autonomy to the federating units on the basis of our Six-Point formula. Such autonomy in order to be effective must include the power of managing the economy. This is why we insist upon federating units having control over monetary and fiscal policy and foreign exchange earnings and other powers to negotiate foreign trade and aid. By giving to the federating units full control over its economic destiny while en-

trusting to the Federal Government responsibility over foreign affairs and defence and subject to certain safeguards, currency, we believe a just federal balance will be attained.

Our Federal scheme envisages the abolition of all Pakistan services and its replacement by Federal services in which persons shall be recruited on the basis of population for all parts of Pakistan.

We also believe that the maintenance of a militia or a paramilitary force by the federating units will effectively contribute towards national security. This Federal scheme by removing the sources of doubt, distrust and discrimination will ensure a strong Pakistan.

This scheme will understandably be opposed by those in one region who would like to treat another region as a colony or a market. We believe, however, that this scheme will have the full support of the common people of Bengal and West Pakistan. With this constitutional framework, we believe it will be possible to bring about a social revolution through the democratic process and to create a socialist economic order free from exploitation.

Rapid economic growth is an imperative necessity in order to meet the needs of our growing population. To achieve it, enormous effort and sacrifices are required of our people. Our people can be expected to respond to our call for making a big collective effort only if we can assure them that the burden of sacrifices as well as the fruits of economic prosperity shall be equitably shared among all sections of the people and all regions of the country. To ensure this, certain radical changes must be made in the structure of our economy.

We believe that it is imperative to place key areas of the economy including banking and insurance under public ownership through nationalisation. Future development in these areas should take place in the public sector. In the

new order, workers should share in the equity capital and management of industrial enterprises.

The private sector also in its own sphere, must make their full contribution to the economy. Monopolies and cartels must be totally eliminated. The tax structure must be made truly progressive and drastic restrictions must be imposed on the consumption of luxuries.

Extensive support and encouragement must be extended to small scale and cottage industries. Such support should include ensuring regular supply of raw materials, such as yarn and dye-stuffs to handloom weavers at reasonable prices. Marketing and credit facilities must also be made available to them.

Small scale industries must be developed through co-operatives and dispersed throughout the countryside reaching into the depths of the rural areas so that desperately needed employment opportunities are extended to our rural masses.

Jute has suffered from criminal neglect. A discriminatory exchange rate and parasitic middlemen have denied to the jute growers a fair price. Nationalisation of the jute trade and much greater emphasis on jute research aimed at improving quality and yield per acre will enable jute to make its rightful contribution to our economy.

Cotton needs similar attention, and therefore we believe that cotton trade should also be nationalised and measures adopted to improve quality and yield. Our major cash crops, tea, sugar-cane and tobacco still suffer from appallingly low yields due to neglect of previous governments.

In a resource-poor country every effort must be made to ensure rapid increase in productivity. A fair and stable price to the growers should also be ensured.

Indeed, our entire agricultural sector needs to be revolutionised. The Jagirdari, Zamindari and Sardari systems in West Pakistan

must be abolished. The entire land system has to undergo a radical reorientation in the interest of the actual tillers of land. Ceilings must be imposed on land holdings. Land above such ceilings and government Khan land must be re-distributed to landless cultivators.

Agriculture must be modernised. The obstacle presented by the fragmentation and sub-division of land-holdings must be overcome. An immediate step in the right direction would be to induce the tillers to group their holdings under multipurpose co-operatives. Government could provide effective inducement for this purpose by funnelling through such co-operatives vital inputs such as irrigation, embankment, drainage, deep tubewells, power pumps, fertilisers, improved seeds, agricultural implements and machinery, credit and instruction in modern agricultural techniques.

As a measure of immediate relief to our peasants who are groaning under the burden of land revenue we would abolish land revenue in respect of holdings upto 25 bighas and write-off all arrears in respect of such holdings. Ultimately we aim to abolish the present system of land revenue.

Three vital areas which form part of the infra-structure of the economy must be accorded the highest priority. The first is flood control. A comprehensive flood control programme must be implemented on an emergency basis. Measures to prevent water-logging and salinity in West Pakistan must also be implemented at an accelerated pace.

The next vital area is that of power. There must be massive expansion in power generation and distribution.

An extensive rural electrification programme must be launched to take electricity to the villages, so as to make it possible for small-scale industries to be established. We aim to attain power generation capacity of 2500 megawatts in Bengal within 5 years. Every

source of power must be harnessed to maximise power generation capacity. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Project and Jamalganj Coal Project must be immediately implemented. Natural gas must also be fully utilised.

The third vital area is that of transport and communications. The highest priority is accorded by us to the construction of a bridge over the river Jamuna to enable direct communications to and from North Bengal. Bridges should also be developed over different points on the river Indus in Sind and the Punjab and over the Buriganga, Sitalakhya and Karanaphuli.

The development of ports, both seaports and inland river ports, as also roads and railways must be accorded the highest priority.

No investment is as vital for the healthy development of our society than investment in education. It is an alarming fact that the number of primary schools in Bengal has declined since 1947. Only 18 per cent of our population has attained literacy and the number of illiterates is increasing by over one million persons per year. Primary education is denied to more than half of the nation's children. Only 18 per cent of our boys and 6 per cent of our girls complete the first five years of elementary school. We believe that at least 4 per cent of the Gross National Product should be committed to education. The salary of college and school teachers and in particular school teachers, must be substantially increased. Illiteracy must be eradicated by adoption of extraordinary methods.

A crash programme must be launched to extend free compulsory primary education to all children within 5 years. Secondary education should be made readily accessible to all sections of our people. New universities, including medical and technical universities, must be rapidly established. Poverty should not be allowed to deprive meritorious boys and girls of the opportunity to pursue higher education. Imme-

diates steps should be taken to ensure that Bengali and Urdu should replace English in all walks of life, while every effort should be made to encourage the development of regional languages.

Turning to the problem of the cities, we find low income groups living in sub-human conditions. The so-called improvement trusts have been busy developing luxurious residential areas for the wealthy, while the poor have been left to fend for themselves. Future urban development must concentrate on providing for the needs of the poor majority of city dwellers. Low cost urban housing must be accorded the highest priority.

In the field of health, even a minimum measure of medical relief is denied to over 90 per cent of our population. Immediate measures should be undertaken to establish a rural medical centre at every union and a hospital at every thana headquarters. National service in the rural areas should be introduced for medical graduate, and para-medical personnel must be trained in large numbers to staff the rural health centres.

Industrial workers play as vital a role in the economy as in the people's struggle. Their basic rights to form trade unions to bargain collectively and to strike must be guaranteed. A living wage and the basic amenities such as housing, education and medical care for themselves and their children must be assured. All labour laws which restrict the basic rights of workers must be repealed. By ensuring that workers are given a stake in the industry, they can be expected to make their full contribution towards increasing industrial productivity. Productivity in all sections of the economy must be increased to the maximum extent possible if we are to meet the needs of our society.

The wage structure throughout the economy must be altered in keeping with the dictates of justice. Price stabilisation measures must be adopted to protect the

the real wages of the workers and low paid employees against spiralling inflation.

We firmly believe in the equality of all citizens. The members of the minority community should know that we always stood against every form of communalism. They shall enjoy equal rights with all other citizens and shall enjoy equal protection of the laws. Every effort must be made to develop our tribal areas so that these areas can be fully integrated with other areas and the tribal people are able to enjoy equal opportunities with other citizens in all walks of life. Our brothers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, in the off shore islands and the coastal areas, require special assistance to develop their latent resources, in order to enable them to play their rightful part in our national life.

Mohajirs should be integrated into the national life so that they may become assimilated with the local people and thus enjoy equal rights and opportunities with them in all walks of life.

I must repudiate once and for all the false propaganda that Islam is endangered by the 6-Point Formula of our economic programme. Nothing which promotes justice between regions and man and man can be opposed to Islam. We have affirmed our commitment to the constitutional principle that no law should be enacted or imposed in Pakistan which is repugnant to the injunctions of Islam as contained in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

To turn to the important area of foreign policy, we believe that it is imperative for us to avoid involvement in global power conflicts. We must, therefore, pursue a truly independent non-aligned foreign policy. We are committed to the immediate withdrawal from SEATO, CENTO and all other military pacts, and to avoid any such involvements in the future. We support the struggle of the oppressed people of the world against imperialism, colonialism and apartheid. In keep-

ing with the principle 'friendship for all and malice towards none' we believe in peaceful co-existence with all States and in particular our neighbours.

We believe that normalisation of our relations with our neighbours would be to the best advantage of our peoples. We, therefore, attach the highest importance to the settlement of our outstanding disputes. We have emphasized the importance of a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the United Nations resolutions. The threat of grave and permanent damage to the economy of Bengal posed by the completion of Farakka Barrage must be immediately met. Every effort must be made for a just solution of this problem without further delay.

But these programmes and policies can only be implemented if power is won by the people. Elections will serve as a referendum on basic national issues particularly that of autonomy on the basis of the Six-Point Formula.

The elected representatives of the people alone can give to this country a constitution which will be a durable basis for living together. It is for this reason that we have repeatedly pointed out that restrictions sought to be imposed on the constitution making powers of the elected representatives of the people are not legitimate. We would once again urge upon the President to repeal the restrictive provisions of the Legal Framework Order. It would also help to create conditions congenial for restoration of democracy if all pending cases and warrants against political workers, students and labourers, arising out of political activities and out of last year's mass upsurge are withdrawn, and all sentences imposed in such cases are commuted. All political prisoners detained without trial should also be released.

It is imperative for the security of the nation that our armed forces should not have to carry the burden of civil administration or to have to involve itself in politics. These highly trained professionals

should be left free to devote themselves exclusively to the vital task of defending the nation's frontiers.

I would like to end by summing up that as a nation we must prove equal to the challenge that faces us. A real living democracy must be established. The different people who make up Pakistan can only live together within a democratic framework. Any attempt to destroy democracy, would in the process destroy Pakistan. Justice between region and region must be ensured by granting full regional autonomy to the federating units, the basis of our Six-Point Formula. Within such a federal democratic framework, radical economic programmes must be implemented to bring about a social revolution.

The Awami League has resolved to face this great challenge. We believe that with the support and confidence of the people which our party enjoys, we shall, *inshaallah*, be able successfully to meet the challenge. Pakistan Zindabad.

—Dawn, 29 October, 1970

## THE SIX-POINT PROGRAMME

- (1) The constitution of Pakistan must be federal with a parliamentary form of government and a legislature directly elected on the basis of adult franchise.
- (2) Federal subjects to be limited to defence and foreign affairs.
- (3) There should be (i) separate currencies for the two wings, freely convertible into each other; (ii) in the alternative, one currency subject to statutory safeguards against flight of capital from the East to the West wing.
- (4) Power of taxation and revenue collections to be vested in the federating units; the centre to be financed by allocation of a share in the State's taxes.
- (5) Separate foreign exchange accounts to be kept for East and West Pakistan, the requirement of the federal government to be met by the two wings in proportion or on any

other fixed basis as may be agreed upon.

- (6) Self-sufficiency of East Pakistan in defence matters, an ordinance factory and a military academy to be set up in the eastern wing, the federal naval headquarters to be located in East Pakistan.

# Elections and after

## NON-VIOLENT NON-COOPERATION : MUJIBUR RAHMAN

(Extract from Programme laid down by Mujibur Rahman at Dacca on 14 March, 1971, 'Dawn', 6.3.1971)

The people of Bangla Desh, civil servants, office and factory workers, peasants and students have demonstrated in no uncertain terms that they would die rather than surrender.

It is deplorable that even at this stage some unthinking people are trying to intimidate a section of civilian employees by promulgating Martial Law Orders.

Today, the entire people are united in their determination not to submit to the Martial Law. I, therefore, urge those to whom the latest order has been directed not to yield to the threat that has been levelled against them. Seventy five million people of Bangla Desh are behind them and their families

The spirit of freedom in Bangla Desh cannot be extinguished. We cannot be conquered because each of us is determined to die if need be to ensure that our future generations can live in freedom and with dignity as free citizens of a free country.

The struggle shall, therefore, continue with renewed vigour un-

til our goal of emancipation is realised.

I appeal to the people to remain ready for any sacrifice and should force be unleashed against them to resist it by all means possible.

**Directive 1:** Secretariats of Central and Provincial Government and semi-Government offices, autonomous bodies, High Courts and all other Courts throughout Bangla Desh shall observe hartal, subject to specific directives set out below and such exemptions and clarifications as may be issued from time to time.

**Directive 2:** All educational institutions throughout Bangla Desh shall remain closed.

Under Directive Nine, Posts and Telegraph Offices shall function only for purpose of letters, telegrams and money orders within Bangla Desh. But foreign mail service and foreign telegrams of all categories may be sent direct to the countries concerned.

Inter-Wing teleprinter channel shall remain open for one hour between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, only for the purpose of enabling banks to send and receive by teleprinter such messages as are permitted under Directive 25.

Inter-Wing Press telegrams only be sent.

**Directive 10:** Only local and inter-district trunk telephone within Bangla Desh shall function. Necessary sections required for repair and maintenance of telephone system shall function.

**Directive 11:** Radio, television and newspapers shall function and shall give complete version of all statements and news about the people's movement otherwise those working in these establishments shall not co-operate.

Under Directive 25, banks shall carry on their operations, including receiving deposits of any amount, inter-bank clearances without any limit within Bangla Desh, and drawings by T.T. or mail transfers from West Pakistan

and cash transactions subject to various restrictions.

The State Bank and the National Bank of Pakistan shall continue to discount T.T. throughout Bangla Desh on the basis that reimbursement shall be effected at Dacca.

Banks with head offices in West Pakistan shall obtain necessary funds to reimburse the State Bank and the National Bank of Pakistan at Dacca.

Foreign travellers cheques may be encashed by authorised dealers and diplomats may operate their foreign exchange accounts and may deal with foreign exchange remittances received by them.

There shall be no operation of lockers. No remittances shall be effected outside Bangla Desh through the State Bank or otherwise.

Letters of credit may be opened against licences including those issued on surrender of bonus vouchers for imports from foreign countries. Barter documents (where goods have already been shipped) shall be valid. Pending export bills shall be collected through the Eastern Mercantile Banks and Eastern Banking Corporation which banks shall comply with such directives as are issued to them in this regard.

**Directive 26:** The State Bank shall observe the same banking and office hours as other banks and shall remain open for taking all necessary steps for the smooth functioning of the banking system of Bangla Desh within the framework of restrictions defined above.

PPP forms may be sanctioned and all approved remittances to foreign countries for students and other approved recipients may be permitted.

**Directive 28:** All travel agents and foreign airline offices may function. Sale proceeds realised by them should be deposited in any bank within Bangla Desh.

**Directive 31:** (A) Until further directives are issued no land revenue shall be realised, no

excise duty shall be realised on salt produced in Bangla Desh, no tax shall be realised on unmanufactured tobacco grown in Bangla Desh, handloom weavers shall be entitled to purchase cotton yarn without any payment of excise duty and mills and dealers shall sell cotton yarn to them at non-duty paid price.

(B) Subject to above, all provincial taxes, including amusement tax, tolls in respect of *hats*, bazars, bridges and ponds shall be realised and credited to the account of the Government of Bangla Desh.

(C) All local taxes including octroi shall be paid.

(D) All indirect Central taxes, including customs duty, excise duty, sales tax hitherto collected and realised by the Central Government shall hence forward be collected by collecting agencies, but shall not be credited to the Central Government account or be transferred or remitted to the Central Government.

Realisations so collected shall be deposited in 'Special Accounts' in the Eastern Banking Corporation Ltd., which banks shall comply with directives issued to them in this regard. All collecting agencies shall implement these directives and such other directives as may be issued from time to time.

(E) Direct Central taxes, such as income tax, shall not be realised till further directives.

Directive 32: Pakistan Insurance Corporation shall function.

All insurance companies including Postal, Life Insurance shall function.

Directive 34: Hoisting of black flags on all house tops shall continue.

# Bangla desh's independence

## PROCLAMATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

(Proclamation dated 10 April, 1971)

The Proclamation of Independence Order, dated the 10th day of April, 1971.

Whereas free elections were held in Bangla Desh from December 7, 1970 to January 17, 1971 to elect representatives for the purpose of framing a constitution and:

Whereas at these elections the people of Bangla Desh elected 167 out of 169 representatives belonging to the Awami League, and of the people to meet on March 3, 1971, for the purpose of framing a constitution and:

Whereas the Assembly so summoned was arbitrarily and illegally postponed for an indefinite period, and

Whereas instead of fulfilling their promise and while still conferring with the representatives of the people of Bangla Desh, the Pakistan authorities declared an unjust and treacherous war and

Whereas in the facts and circumstances of such treacherous conduct Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the undisputed leader of 75 million people of Bangla Desh, in due fulfilment of the legitimate right of self-determination of the people of Bangla Desh, duly made a Declaration of Independence at Dacca on March 26, 1971 and urged the people of Bangla Desh to defend the honour and integrity of Bangla Desh, and

Whereas in the conduct of a ruthless and savage war, the Pakistani authorities committed and

are still committing numerous acts of genocide and unprecedented tortures, amongst others on the civilian and unarmed people of Bangla Desh, and

Whereas the Pakistan Government by levying an unjust war and committing genocide and by other repressive measures made it impossible for the elected representatives of the people of Bangla Desh to meet and frame a constitution, and give to themselves a government, and

Whereas the people of Bangla Desh by their heroism, bravery and revolutionary fervour have established effective control over the territories of Bangla Desh,

We, the elected representatives of the people of Bangla Desh as honour-bound by the mandate given to us by the people of Bangla Desh whose will is supreme, duly constitute ourselves into a Constituent Assembly, and

Having held mutual consultations, and

In order to ensure for the people of Bangla Desh equality, human dignity and social justice.

Declare and constitute Bangla Desh to be a Sovereign People's Republic and thereby confirm the Declaration of Independence already made by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and

Do hereby confirm and resolve that till such time as a constitution is framed, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman shall be the President of the Republic and that Syed Nazrul Islam shall be the Vice-President of the Republic, and

That the President shall be the Supreme Commander of all the armed forces of the Republic,

Shall exercise all the executive and legislative powers of the Republic including the power to grant pardon,

Shall have the power to appoint a Prime Minister and such other

Ministers as he considers necessary,

Shall have the power to summon and adjourn the Constituent Assembly, and

Do all other things that may be necessary to give to the people of Bangla Desh an orderly and just government.

We, the elected representatives of the people of Bangla Desh do further resolve that in the event of there being no President or the President being unable to enter upon his office or being unable to exercise his powers and duties due to any reason whatsoever, the Vice-President shall have and exercise all the powers, duties and responsibilities herein conferred on the President.

We, further resolve that we undertake to observe and give effect to all duties and obligations devolved upon us as a member of the family of nations and by the charter of the United Nations,

We, further resolve that to give effect to this our resolution we authorise and appoint Professor M. Yusuf Ali our duly constituted potentiary to give to the President and Vice-President oaths of office.

#### CHALLENGE OF RESPONSE: TAJUDDIN AHMED

*(Text of the Statement of Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister of Bangla Desh, April 17, 1971)*

Bangla Desh is at war. It has been given no choice but to secure its right of self-determination through a national liberation struggle against the colonial oppression of West Pakistan.

In the face of positive attempts by the Government of Pakistan to distort the facts in a desperate attempt to cover up their war of genocide in Bangla Desh, the world must be told the circumstances under which the peace-loving people of Bangla Desh were driven to substitute armed struggle for parliamentary politics to realise their just aspirations.

The six-point programme for autonomy for Bangla Desh within

Pakistan had been put forward in all sincerity by the Awami League as the last possible solution to preserve the integrity of Pakistan. Fighting the elections to the National Assembly on the issue of six points, the Awami League won 167 out of 169 seats from Bangla Desh in a House of 313. Its electoral victory was so decisive that it won 80 per-cent of the popular vote cast. The decisive nature of its victory placed it in a clear majority within the National Assembly.

The post election period was a time of hope, for never had a people spoken so decisively in the history of parliamentary democracy. It was widely believed in both wings that a viable constitution based on the six points could be worked out. The Pakistan People's Party, which emerged as the leading party in Sind and Punjab, had avoided raising the issue of six points in their election campaign and had no obligation whatever to its electorate to resist it. In Baluchistan, the dominant party, the National Awami Party, was fully committed to the six points. In the NWFP, the NAP was dominantly for autonomy. The course of the elections, which marked the defeat of the reactionary parties, therefore, gave every reason to be optimistic about the future of democracy in Pakistan.

Preparatory to the convening of the National Assembly, talks were expected between the main parties in the political arena. However, whilst the Awami League was always willing, preparatory to going to the Assembly, to explain its constitutional position and to discuss alternative proposals from the other parties it believed that the spirit of a true democracy demanded that the constitution be debated and finalised in the National Assembly rather than in secret sessions. To this end, it insisted on an early summoning of the National Assembly. In anticipation of this session, the Awami League worked day and night to prepare a draft constitution based on six points and fully examined all the

implications of formulating and implementing such a constitution.

The first major talks over Pakistan's political future took place between General Yahya and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in mid-January. In this session, General Yahya proved the extent of the Awami League's commitment to its programme and was assured that they were fully aware of its implications. But, contrary to expectation, General Yahya did not spell out his own ideas about the constitution. General Yahya gave the impression of not finding anything seriously objectionable in the six points, but emphasised the need for coming to an understanding with the PPP in West Pakistan.

The next round of talks took place between the PPP and the Awami League from January 27, 1971 in Dacca where Mr. Bhutto and his team held a number of sessions with the Awami League to discuss the constitution.

As in the case with General Yahya, Mr. Bhutto did not bring any concrete proposals of his own about the nature of the constitution. He and his advisers were mainly interested in discussing the implications of the six points. Since their responses were essentially negative and they had not prepared a brief of their own, it was not possible for the talks to develop into serious negotiations where attempts could be made to bridge the gap between the two parties. It was evident that as yet Mr. Bhutto had no formal position of his own from which to negotiate.

It must be made clear that when the PPP left Dacca there was no indication from their part that a deadlock had been reached with the Awami League. Rather, they confirmed that all doors were open and that following a round of talks with Pakistani leaders, the PPP would either have a second and more substantive round of talks with the Awami League or would meet in the National Assembly whose committees provided ample opportunity for de-



tailed discussion on the constitution.

Mr. Bhutto's announcement to boycott the National Assembly, therefore, came as a complete surprise. The boycott decision was surprising because Mr. Bhutto had already been accommodated once by the President when he refused Sheikh Mujib's plea for an early session of the Assembly on February 15 and fixed it, in line with Mr. Bhutto's preference, for March 3.

Following his decision to boycott the Assembly, Mr. Bhutto launched a campaign of intimidation against all other parties in West Pakistan to prevent them from attending the session. In this task, there is evidence that Lt. Gen. Umer, chairman of the National Security Council and close associate of President Yahya Khan, with a view to strengthening Mr. Bhutto's hand, personally pressurised various west wing leaders not to attend the assembly. In spite of this display of pressure tactics by Mr. Bhutto and Lt. Gen. Umer, all members of the National Assembly from West Pakistan, except the PPP and the Qayyum Muslim League (QML), had booked their seats to East Pakistan for the session of March 3.

Within the QML itself, half the members had booked their seats and there were signs of revolt within the PPP where many members were wanting to come to Dacca. Faced with the breakdown of this joint front against Bangla Desh, General Yahya obliged Mr. Bhutto on March 1 by postponing the assembly session not for any finite period but *sine die*. Moreover, he dismissed the Governor of East Pakistan, Admiral S. M. Ahsan, who was believed to be one of the moderates in his administration. The cabinet with its component of Bengalis was also dismissed so that all power was concentrated in the hands of the west wing military junta.

In these circumstances, Yahya's gesture could not be seen as anything but an attempt to frustrate the popular will by colluding with

Mr. Bhutto. The National Assembly was the only forum where Bangla Desh could assert its voice and political strength, and to frustrate this was a clear indication that Parliament was not to be the real source of power in Pakistan.

The reaction to the postponement in Bangla Desh was inevitable and spontaneous and throughout the land, people took to the streets to record their protest at this arbitrary act. People now felt sure that Gen. Yahya never really intended to transfer power and was making a mockery of parliamentary politics. The popular mood felt that the rights of Bangla Desh could never be realised within the framework of Pakistan, where Gen. Yahya could so blatantly frustrate the summoning of an assembly proclaimed by his own writ, and urged that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman must go for full independence.

Sheikh Mujib, however, continued to seek a political settlement. This was in itself a major gesture in the face of the cold-blooded firing on unarmed demonstrators on March 2 and 3 which had already led to over a thousand casualties.

The course of the non-cooperation movement is now a part of history. Never in the course of any liberation struggle has non-cooperation been carried to the limits attained within Bangla Desh between March 1 and 25. Non-cooperation was total. No judge of the High Court could be found to administer the oath of office to the new Governor, Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan. The entire civilian administration, including the police and the civil service of Pakistan, refused to attend office. The people stopped the supply of food to the army. Even the civilian employees of the defence establishment joined the boycott.

Non-cooperation did not stop at abstention from work. The civilian administration and the police positively pledged their support to

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and put themselves under his orders.

In this situation, the Awami League without being a formally constituted Government, was forced to take on the responsibility of keeping the economy and administration running whilst non-cooperation lasted. In this task they had the unqualified support not only of the people but the administration and the business community. The latter two subordinated themselves to the directives of the Awami League and accepted them as the sole authority to solve their various problems.

In these unique circumstances the economy and administration were kept going in spite of the formidable problems arising out of the power vacuum which had suddenly emerged in Bangla Desh. In spite of the lack of any formal authority, Awami League volunteers in cooperation with the police maintained a level of law and order which was a considerable improvement on normal times.

Faced with this demonstration of total support of the Awami League to this historic non-cooperation movement, General Yahya Khan appears to have modified his tactics. On March 6, he still seemed determined to provoke a confrontation when he made his highly provocative speech putting the full blame for the crisis on the Awami League and not even referring to the architect of the crisis, Mr. Bhutto. It seems that he expected a declaration of independence on March 7. The army in Dacca was put on full alert to crush the move and Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan was flown to replace Lt. Gen. Yakub to signify the hardening of attitudes within the junta.

Sheikh Mujib, however, once again opted for the path of political settlement in spite of massive public sentiment for independence. In presenting his four-point proposal for attending the National Assembly he not only had to contain the public mood but to leave a way open for Yahya



to explore this last chance for a peaceful settlement.

It is now clear that General Yahya and his generals never had the slightest intention of solving Pakistan's political crisis peacefully but were only interested in buying time to permit the reinforcement of their military machine within Bangla Desh. General Yahya's visit to Dacca was a mere cover for his plan of genocide. It now becomes clear that contingency plans for such a crisis had already begun well in advance of the crisis.

Shortly before March 1, tanks which had been sent north to Rangput to defend the borders were being sent off to West Pakistan on a priority basis along with the families of West Pakistani businessmen.

The military build-up was accelerated after March 1 and continued through the talks up to March 25. Members of the armed forces dressed in civilian clothes were flown in PLA commercial flights via Ceylon. C-130s carrying arms and provisions for the garrisons flew into Dacca. It is estimated that up to one division, with complementary support, was brought into Bangla Desh between March 1 and 25 to ensure security, the airport was put under strict Air Force control and heavily guarded with artillery and machine-gun nets whilst the movement of passengers was strictly supervised. An SS commando group specially trained for undercover operations in sabotage and assassination was distributed in key centres in Bangla Desh and Saidpur in the two days before March 25 to provoke clashes between locals and non-locals so as to provide a cover for military intervention.

As part of this strategy of deception, General Yahya adopted the most conciliatory posture in his talks with Sheikh Mujib. In the talks beginning on March 16 he expressed regrets for what had happened and his sincere desire for a political settlement. In a crucial meeting with Sheikh Mujib he was asked to positively state

the junta's position on the Awami League's four-point proposal. He indicated that there were no serious objections and that an interim constitution could be worked out by the respective advisers embodying the four points.

The basic points on which agreement was reached were:

- (1) Lifting of martial law and transfer of power to a civilian Government by a Presidential proclamation.
- (2) Transfer of power in the provinces to the majority parties.
- (3) General Yahya to remain as President and in control of the Central Government.
- (4) Separate sittings of the National Assembly members from East and West Pakistan preparatory to a joint session of the house to finalise the constitution.

Contrary to the distortions now put out by both General Yahya and Mr Bhutto, the proposal for separate sittings of the assembly was suggested by General Yahya to accommodate Mr. Bhutto. He cited the practical advantage that whilst six-points provided a viable blueprint to regulate relations between Bangla Desh and the Centre, its application would raise serious difficulties in the west wing. For this reason the west wing MNAs (Members of the National Assembly) must be permitted to get together to work out a new pattern of relationship in the context of a six-point constitution and the dissolution of one unit.

Once this agreement in principle had been reached between Sheikh Mujib and General Yahya there was only the question of defining the powers of Bangla Desh vis-a-vis the Centre during the interim phase. Here, it was again jointly agreed that the distribution of power should as far as possible approximate to the final constitution approved by the National Assembly which, it was expected, would be based on the six points.

For working out this part of the interim settlement Mr. M. M.

Ahmed, Economic Adviser to the President, was specially flown in. In his talks with the Awami League advisers he made it clear that provided the political agreement had been reached there were no insuperable problems to working out some version of the six points even in the interim period. The final list of these amendments to the Awami League draft which he presented as suggestions, indicated that the gap between the Government and Awami League position was no longer one of principle but remained merely over the precise phrasing of the proposals. The Awami League at its sitting of March 24 had accepted the amendment with certain minor changes of language and there was nothing to prevent the holding of a final drafting session between the advisers of General Yahya and Sheikh Mujib when the interim constitution would be finalised.

It must be made clear that at no stage was there any breakdown of talks or any indication by General Yahya or his team that they had a final position which could not be abandoned.

The question of legal cover for the transfer of power is merely another belated fabrication by General Yahya to cover his genocide. He and his team had agreed that in line with the precedent of the Indian Independence Act of 1947, power could be transferred by a Presidential proclamation. The notion that there would be no legal cover to the arrangement raised subsequently by Mr. Bhutto and endorsed by General Yahya was never a bone of contention between Sheikh Mujib and General Yahya. There is not the slightest doubt that had General Yahya indicated that a meeting of the National Assembly was essential for transferring power, the Awami League would not have broken the talks on such a minor legal technicality. After all, as the majority party it had nothing to fear from such a meeting and its acceptance of the decision for a separate sitting was a decision to accommodate Mr. Bhutto rather

than a fundamental stand for the party.

Evidence that agreement in principle between contending parties had been reached is provided by Mr. Bhutto's own press conference on March 25. It is not certain what transpired in the separate session between General Yahya and Mr. Bhutto, but there is evidence that deliberate falsehoods about the course of the talks with the Awami League were fed to the PPP, who were told that Sheikh Mujib was determined to have a showdown and was escalating his demands. Needless to say, not the slightest indication of these misgivings had been raised in the meeting between the Awami League team and General Yahya Khan's advisers, where amicability and optimism had prevailed to the end.

Whilst hope for a settlement was being raised, more bad signs of the intentions of the army were provided by their sudden decision to unload the munition ship, MV Swat, berthed at Chittagong port. Preparatory to this decision Brig. Mazumdar, a Bengali officer commanding the garrison in Chittagong, had been suddenly removed from his command and replaced by a West Pakistani. On the night of March 24, he was flown to Dacca under armed escort, and has probably been executed. Under the new command, notice was given to local authorities of the decision to unload the ship, in spite of the fact that the army had abstained from doing so for the last 17 days in the face of non-cooperation from the port workers. The decision to unload was a calculated provocation which immediately brought 100,000 people on the streets of Chittagong and led to massive firing by the army to break their way out. The issue was raised by the Awami League with General Peerzada as to why this escalation was being permitted whilst talks were still going on. He gave no answer beyond a promise to pass it on to General Yahya Khan.

Following the final meeting between General Yahya's and the

Awami League's advisers on March 24 where Mr. M. M. Ahmed passed on his amendments, a call was awaited from General-Peerzada for a final session where the draft could be finalised. No such call materialised and instead it was learnt that Mr. M. M. Ahmed, who was central to the negotiations, had suddenly left for Karachi on the morning of March 25 without any warning to the Awami League team.

By 11 p.m. of March 25, all preparations were ready and the troops began to take up position in the city. In an act of treachery unparalleled in contemporary history, a programme of calculated genocide was unleashed on the peaceful and unsuspecting population of Dacca by the midnight of March 25. No ultimatum was given to the Awami League by Gen. Yahya. No curfew order was issued when the machine-guns, artillery and cannons on the tanks unleashed their reign of death and destruction. By the time the first martial law proclamations issued by Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan were broadcast the next morning, some 50,000 people, most of them without offering any resistance, and many women and children, had been butchered. Dacca had been turned into an inferno with fires raging in most corners of the city. Sleeping inhabitants, who had been drawn from their homes by the fires started by the military were machine-gunned as they ran to escape the flames.

Whilst the police, the EPR and armed volunteers put up a heroic resistance, the main victims remained the weak, the innocent and the unsuspecting who were killed at random in their thousands. We are compiling a first hand account of the details of the genocide committed by the Pakistani army on the orders of the President of Pakistan which we will publish shortly. The scale and brutality of the action exceeds anything perpetrated in the civilised world.

General Yahya himself left Dacca on the night of March 25 after having unleashed the Pakis-

tan army, with an open licence to commit genocide on all Bengalis. His own justification for this act of barbarism was not forthcoming till 8 p.m. the next day when the world was given its first explanation for the unleashing 'of this holocaust'. The statement was self-contradictory and laced with positive lies. His branding of a party as traitors and outlaws, with whom he had only 48 hours ago been negotiating for a peaceful transfer of power, bore no relationship to the situation in Bangla Desh or to the course of the negotiations. His promise to hand over power to the elected representatives of the people after banning the Awami League which was the sole representative of Bangla Desh and held a majority of seats in the National Assembly was a mockery of the freely recorded voice of 75 million Bengalis. The crudity of the statement was clear evidence that General Yahya was no longer interested in taking shelter behind either logic or morality and had reverted to the law of the jungle in his bid to crush the people of Bangla Desh.

Pakistan is now dead and buried under a mountain of corpses. The hundreds and thousands of people murdered by the army in Bangla Desh will act as an impenetrable barrier between West Pakistan and the people of Bangla Desh. By resorting to pre-planned genocide Gen. Yahya must have known that he was himself digging Pakistan's grave. The subsequent massacres perpetrated on his orders by his licensed killers on the people were not designed to preserve the unity of a nation. They were acts of racial hatred and sadism devoid of even the elements of humanity. Professional soldiers on order, violated their code of military honour and were seen as beasts of prey who indulged in an orgy of murder, rape, loot, arson and destruction unequal in the annals of civilisation. These acts indicate that the concept of two countries is already deeply rooted in the minds of General Yahya and his associates, who would not dare commit such

atrocities on their own country-men.

General Yahya's genocide is thus without political purpose. It serves only as the last act in the tragic history of Pakistan, which General Yahya has chosen to write with the blood of the people of Bangla Desh. The objective is genocide and scorched-earth, before his troops are either driven out or perish. In this time, he hopes to liquidate our political leadership, intelligentsia and administration, to destroy our industries and public amenities, and as a final act, he intends to raze our cities to the ground. Already his occupation army has made substantial progress towards this objective. Bangla Desh will be set back fifty years as West Pakistan's parting gift to a people they have exploited for twenty-three years for their own benefit.

This is a point of major significance to those great powers who choose to ignore this largest single act of genocide since the days of Belsen and Auschwitz. If they think they are preserving the unity of Pakistan, they can forget it because General Yahya himself has no illusions about the future of Pakistan.

They must realise that Pakistan is dead and murdered by Gen. Yahya—and that independent Bangla Desh is really sustained by the indestructible will and courage of 75 million Bengalis who are daily nurturing the roots of this new nationhood with their blood. No power on earth can unmake this new nation and sooner or later both big and small powers will have to accept it into the world fraternity.

It is, therefore, in the interest of politics as much as humanity for the big powers to put their full pressure on General Yahya to cage his killers and bring them back to West Pakistan. We will be eternally grateful to the people of the USSR and India and the freedom loving people of all the countries for their full support they have already given us in this struggle. We would welcome similar support from the People's

Republic of China, the USA, France, Great Britain and all Afro-Asian countries who have freed themselves from colonial rule and from all freedom loving countries. Each in their own way should exercise considerable leverage on West Pakistan and were they to exercise this influence, General Yahya could not sustain his war of aggression against a Bangla Desh for a single day longer.

Bangla Desh will be the eighth most populous country in the world. Its only goal will be to rebuild a new nation from the ashes and carnage left behind by General Yahya's occupation army. It will be a stupendous task because of the destruction of the economy by General Yahya's army in our already under-developed and overpopulated region. But we now have a cause and a people who have been hardened in the resistance, who have shed their blood for their nation and won their freedom in an epic struggle which pitted unarmed people against a modern army. Such a nation cannot fail in its task of securing the foundations of its nationhood.

In our struggle for survival we seek the friendship of all people, the big powers and the small. We do not aspire to join any bloc or pact but will seek assistance from those who give it in a spirit of goodwill free from any desire to control our destinies. We have struggled far too long to permit ourselves to become anyone's satellite.

We now appeal to the nations of the world for recognition and assistance both material and moral in our struggle for nationhood. Every day this is delayed a thousand lives are lost and more of Bangla Desh's vital assets are destroyed. In the name of humanity, act now and earn our undying friendship.

This we now present to the world as the case of the people of Bangla Desh. Bangla Desh has earned her right to recognition at great cost, as the people of Bangla Desh made sacrifices of

unequal magnitude and fought hard in order to establish the rightful place for Bangla Desh in the comity of nations.

## Indian policy

### PARLIAMENT RESOLVES

Moving the Resolution on East Bengal in both the Houses of Parliament on 31 March, 1971, the Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, said:

The tragedy which has overtaken our valiant neighbours in East Bengal so soon after their rejoicing over their electoral victory has united us in grief for their suffering, concern for the wanton destruction of their beautiful land and anxiety for their future.

I wish to move a resolution which has been discussed with the leaders of the Opposition and, I am glad to say, approved unanimously:

### TEXT OF RESOLUTION

This House expresses its deep anguish and grave concern at the recent developments in East Bengal. A massive attack by armed forces, despatched from West Pakistan, has been unleashed against the entire people of East Bengal with a view to suppressing their urges and aspirations.

Instead of respecting the will of the people so unmistakably expressed through the election in Pakistan in December 1970, the Government of Pakistan has chosen to flout the mandate of the people.

The Government of Pakistan has not only refused to transfer power

to legally elected representatives but has arbitrarily prevented the National Assembly from assuming its rightful and sovereign role. The people of East Bengal are being sought to be suppressed by the naked use of force, by bayonets, machine guns, tanks, artillery and aircraft.

The Government and people of India have always desired and worked for peaceful, normal and fraternal relations with Pakistan. However, situated as India is and bound as the peoples of the sub-continent are by centuries old ties of history, culture and tradition, this House cannot remain indifferent to the macabre tragedy being enacted so close to our border. Throughout the length and breadth of our land, our people have condemned, in unmistakable terms, the atrocities now being perpetrated on an unprecedented scale upon an unarmed and innocent people.

This House expresses its profound sympathy for and solidarity with the people of East Bengal in their struggle for a democratic way of life.

Bearing in mind the permanent interests which India has in peace, and committed as we are to uphold and defend human rights, this House demands immediate cessation of the use of force and the massacre of defenceless people. This House calls upon all peoples and Governments of the world to take urgent and constructive steps to prevail upon the Government of Pakistan to put an end immediately to the systematic decimation of people which amounts to genocide.

This House records its profound conviction that the historic upsurge of the 75 million people of East Bengal will triumph. The House wishes to assure them that their struggle and sacrifices will receive the wholehearted sympathy and support of the people of India.

#### IDENTICAL VALUES: INDIRA GANDHI

(Statement in Rajya Sabha, 29 March, 1971)

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, we have watched the happenings in

Pakistan earlier, that is, the election in East Bengal, with great admiration and hope, hope that it was the beginning of a new future for the whole country, a future which would make them more united and strong. But, as my colleague, Shri Swaran Singh, has said, far from leading into this brightness they have turned along a dark path, a tragic path, bringing suffering—in fact, perhaps, suffering is too small a word—to an entire people.

I am sure Hon. Members will appreciate that however heavy our hearts may be, however deeply we may be sharing the agony of the people there, it is not possible for the Government to speak in the same words as Hon. Members can do. In fact, it is because we are so deeply conscious of the historic importance of this moment that we are, at the same time, aware of the seriousness of the situation when a wrong step, a wrong word, can have an effect entirely different from the one which we all intend.

The House is aware that we have to act within certain international norms. It is good to see that the Parties here have expressed certain views. For instance, the Swatantra Party has expressed admiration for the socialist programme of Shri Mujibur Rahman. The Jan Sangh have supported his secular policy and have also said that the people of East Bengal are their brothers. I hope they will extend the same sympathy to all the people of our own country too.

As I said earlier, we are not unaware of what is taking place in East Pakistan and of what it means not only to the people there but the danger that it holds for us, not for any one part of our country, but for the entire country. So we are interested in this matter for many reasons, firstly as one Member has said that Shri Mujibur Rahman has stood for the values which we ourselves cherish, the values of democracy, the values of secularism and the values of socialism.

We are also concerned with the truly wonderful and unique way

in which the people there had stood behind him and behind these values. We are no less full of sorrow and grave concern and even agony at what is happening there but I can only appeal to the Hon. Members that this is not a moment when the Government can say anything more and whatever the Government may or may not be able to do it would not be wise if this becomes a matter for public debate.

I do not think that Hon. Members expect us to give replies to the various questions that were asked. I think the purpose of this discussion was more that we should know their mind and hear their suggestions. As Hon. Members know, I held a meeting this morning with the Leaders of the Opposition which I hope to continue. We are as closely in touch with the happenings in East Bengal as is possible in this situation and I hope to keep closely in touch with the Leaders of the Opposition as well as other Members who would like to come and meet us so that we can know their mind. We cannot always, I must admit, give our mind but we will certainly tell them as much as is possible in this situation.

#### PRESS STATEMENT: MAULANA ABDUL HAMID

(22nd April, 1971)

Lakhs of Bengalis suffered tortures in jails and in detention and many of them were hanged for trying to free the country from the British imperialists. It is a tragedy that though they achieved freedom from the British rule, the West Pakistan rulers and exploiters hatched a conspiracy to crush the 74 crore Bengalis politically, economically, culturally and socially, though the Bengalis were in a majority in Pakistan. The historic Lahore resolution for the creation of Pakistan spoke of two independent and sovereign States in the East and the West. The struggle for making East Bengal a sovereign independent State has been going on since the creation of Pakistan, in accordance with this resolution. The West Pakistan rulers have tried to foil this strug-

gle by oppression and by appointing some agents who worked in the interests of the West Pakistan feudal and capitalist overlords. But the people of East Bengal have struggled continuously for the last 23 years and have given much blood to get independence for themselves. The armed struggle of 1971 is the culmination of this struggle.

In 1949, the then Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, tried to foist a ridiculous constitution which was nipped in the bud by the people of East Bengal. They foiled the attempt of West Pakistan leaders to crush the mother-tongue of Bengalis, the majority of the people of Pakistan. The historic language movement of 1952 is a shining example. In 1954, the people of East Bengal recorded a historic victory in the ballot boxes against the exploiters from West Pakistan. Then was imposed Iskander Mirza's rule which inflicted inhuman atrocities on the people of East Bengal, after Mr. A.K. Fazlul Huq's Ministry was dismissed by the Governor-General, Ghulam Mohammad. Afterwards the military dictator Ayub dissolved the Parliament and nullified the constitution and banned all political parties. He inflicted a reign of terror on all political parties. But the Bengalis were not daunted. They were not silenced. In 1962, the students started a movement against Ayub. With the help of some agents, Ayub tried to hoodwink the world and tried to crush the independence movement in East Bengal. The revolutionary Bengalis started a movement against the Ayub regime and protested against the Ayub regime's so-called Agartala Conspiracy Case. When the students, peasants, workers and political parties launched a mass movement in 1969-70, Ayub was compelled to retire after handing over power to another military dictator, Yahya Khan. Gen. Yahya Khan was forced to promise that he would establish democracy but he continued his conspiracy behind the curtain. The West Pakistan military rulers, capitalists and feudalists thought that in the name of Islam and integrity and by

spending huge amounts of money, they would be able to win over some traitors who would work as their agents for permanent exploitation.

In 1970, however, the people of East Bengal voted for the Awami League en masse and expressed their determination to establish a sovereign Bengal on the basis of the Lahore resolution. More than 99% of the representatives were elected in 1970 with the boat as their symbol. The reason for this historic victory can be found in the dream of the Bengalis to have an independent and sovereign Bangla Desh. Rulers of West Pakistan could not realise beforehand that the people of East Bengal would give such a tremendously unified election verdict against the oppression and exploitation of West Pakistan vested interests. This election verdict made them unnerved and simultaneously infuriated them against the people of East Bengal.

So, totally ignoring the democratic rights of 7½ crore Bengalis, Gen. Yahya Khan, under cover of long negotiation unleashed his army on the people on March 25. He himself fled away from Dacca at midnight. Under Tikka Khan's leadership, an orgy of violence and murder was let loose in Dacca from 10.30 p.m. on March 25. The army started killing the students, young men, teachers, professors, intellectuals, traders and others with tanks, artillery, mortar, machine-guns and other deadly weapons. They demolished schools, colleges, mosques, temples, hostels and industrial areas and burnt innumerable houses. From March 26, they started this killing in cities like Jessore, Rangpur, Pabna, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Bagura, Tangail, Mymensingh and many other places. They burnt the villages on the road side and committed mass murder. They bombed and strafed thousands of innocent people. Women and children were not spared. Women were molested and there was wide scale looting of food stuff and live stock. Shops and banks were looted by the soldiers. Women were kidnapped from

schools and colleges. Who knows what has happened to them.

Has anybody heard of such atrocities? Is there any parallel in history? The examples of Chiang-kai Shek in China and the Czar in Russia and of British oppression in undivided India or the *zulum* of Zalem Yazid at Karbala pale into insignificance before this latest example of inhuman atrocity. The Yahya regime and his supporters think that they will be able to crush the people of East Bengal permanently by such oppression and they will be able to continue their exploitation by breaking the backbone of Bengalis. They thought of telling the world that the people of Bengal did not want independence. They wanted to tell the world that Pakistan's enemy, India, had created this movement by helping a handful of miscreants of East Bengal. But the people of the world cannot be misled. They know why foreign correspondents were expelled from East Bengal on March 26. Is it not because the Pakistani rulers were afraid that the foreign press would expose the barbaric atrocity and tell the world of the great struggle of independence of the people of Bengal?

The foreign correspondents endangered their lives to get news of the war during the last world war. There is not a single instance in the history of the world of a dictator like Yahya who expelled the correspondents from the country. The barbaric Government not only prevented correspondents but they prevented the international Red Cross from going there to render help to the people of Bengal who have been oppressed inhumanly and rendered homeless. They did this to cover up their misdeeds. They wanted to ensure that the world would not know that the people of Bengal were prepared to give their lives for independence. There is no connection between this people's war and India. If a nation does not have its own urge, it cannot get independence with outside help.

The question is whether the people of the world and nations of

the world will support the struggle of the 7½ crores people of Bengal for independence or support the abominable conspiracy of the dictatorial exploiting ruling clique which is indulging in mass murder.

Yahya, who is a Muslim himself, in the name of religion is mercilessly killing lakhs of Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Buddhists. His soldiers who say that they are Muslims are raping women, including Muslim women. Though Muslims themselves, they are destroying mosques. They kill Muslims who are offering prayers. What will the Muslim world do about this? Will they support the un-Islamic anti-humanity abominable policy of Yahya? Or will they support the cause of truth, justice and love as preached by Islam?

The 7½ crores Bengalis like to know from the democratic world if it will support Yahya's dictatorship? Will it remain neutral and thereby support him under the pretext that the situation is Pakistan's internal affair? The freedom struggle of East Bengal cannot be Pakistan's internal affair. The West Pakistanis have ignored the Lahore Resolution which was unanimously accepted by 10 crores of Muslims of undivided India. By ignoring this basic resolution of the Pakistan movement they have tried to convert East Bengal into a colony for the last 23 years. This is a just struggle of the heroic Bengali people for independence and for preventing exploitation and loss of independence. The demonic West Pakistanis are trying to enslave the Bengalis and establish their empire. Has world opinion nothing to do in this mass killing? Will the democratic world support the mass killing with some excuse or other? The socialist world, including China, has always helped the exploited and oppressed people in their struggle for establishing their rights. What role will they play in the current killing in East Bengal when the 7½ crore people are fighting the final battle for independence after being exploited for 23 years? By supporting Yahya,

how can they convince world opinion that they are friends of the oppressed people?

East Bengal is a part of Asia. The people of this country look towards the Asian nations, particularly to the Afro-Asian nations. The people of East Bengal, in this moment of crisis put a burning question to humanity whether their great and just struggle will be allowed to be crushed for ever?

I make a fervent appeal to all peace loving and democratic minded people and Governments of the world to extend an early recognition to the newly formed Independent Government of the People's Republic of Bangla Desh.

I appeal to all the people of East Bengal, I appeal to the peasants, workers, blacksmiths, pottery workers, boatmen, weavers, persons engaged in cottage industry, students, traders, intelligentsia and service holders and others to forge an unity like steel. Some opportunists of East Bengal who are exposed are trying to mislead you in the name of religion and integrity by carrying on false propaganda. They are agents of the military junta, industrialists, feudalists, and despotic bureaucrats of West Pakistan. These Mirzafars of East Bengal have stabbed the freedom movement in the back during the last 23 years by being the agents of the West Pakistani vested interests. Don't listen to these traitors. The vested interests will have their purpose served if they can split your unity and steely determination. You will then be slaves of the West Pakistan military rulers, capitalists, bureaucrats and feudalists for ever and ever. At the present moment, unity, mental strength and burning patriotism are our most vital weapons. Our victory is certain. God hates the oppressors and traitors. We will definitely get the blessings of Allah in our great struggle and we will establish a free, sovereign, happy and prosperous Bangla Desh in East Bengal.

May Allah be with us.

# Statistical appendix

TABLE I  
Public Sector Outlays Under Plans

(Rs. million)

	West Pakistan	East Pakistan
Pre Plan (1950-55)	2,065 (68.7%)	940 (31.3%)
I Plan (1955-60)	4,630 (70.2%)	1,970 (29.8%)
II Plan (1960-65)	7,695 (55.2%)	6,255 (44.8%)
III Plan (1965-70)	13,700 (54.8%)	11,300 (45.2%)
IV Plan (1970-75) (proposed)	19,600 (40%)	29,400 (60%)

TABLE II  
Comparative Position in Large Scale Industry

Value added in Mfg.		W. Pakistan	East Pakistan
(Rs. million)	1954	547.8	140.5
	1959	1152.1	392.6
Employment			
('000 men)	1954	141.5	59.3
	1959	310.9	139.0

\*Courtesy, Indian Institute of Public Opinion

TABLE III  
Estimates of Fixed Investment  
(Rs. million)

	W. Pakistan	East Pakistan
1959-60	2,014	1,024
1960-65 (II Plan)	4,297	2,038
1965-66	5,340	2,385

TABLE IV  
Imports and Exports for East and West Pakistan: Inter-Wing and Foreign Trade  
(Annual Average Rs. million)

	Pre-Plan 1950-1 1954-5	I Plan 1955-56 1959-60	II Plan 1960-1 1964-5
<b>EAST PAKISTAN</b>			
Imports from abroad (c.i.f.)	439.4	624.8	1,219.2
Imports from W. Pakistan	287.8	564.3	881.5
Total:	727.2	1,189.1	2,100.7
Exports abroad (f.o.b.)	863.4	979.8	1,260.3
Exports to W. Pakistan	125.7	280.6	457.0
Total exports	989.1	1,260.4	1,717.3
A. Balance of Trade with W. Pakistan	-162.1	-283.7	-424.5
B. Balance of Trade with rest of world	424.0	355.0	41.1
(A & B) Combined balance	261.9	71.3	-383.4
<b>WEST PAKISTAN</b>			
Imports from abroad (c.i.f.)	1,053.1	1,525.0	2,772.7
Imports from E. Pakistan	125.7	280.6	457.0
Total:	1,178.8	1,805.6	3,229.7
Exports abroad (f.o.b.)	852.8	616.3	857.2
Exports to E. Pakistan	287.8	564.3	881.5
	1,140.6	1,180.6	1,738.7
Balance of Trade with E. Pakistan	162.1	283.7	424.5
Balance of Trade with rest of world	-200.3	-908.7	-1915.5
Balance of Trade combined	-38.2	-625.0	-1,491.0

Source: Pakistan C.S.O. Bulletin and Economic Survey 1966-67



TABLE V  
Industrial Capacity and Production and Employment in E. Bengal  
in major industries: 1966

	No. Units	Capacity	Workers	Output
Jute	29	213,000 Spindles 14,332 Looms	75,000	409,360 tons
Cotton Textiles	45	654,000 Spindles 6,000 Looms	25,000	
Cloth	..	..	..	60 m. yds.
Yarn	..	..	..	40 m. yds.
Birds	300	..	27,000	..
Jute Balling Presses	..	..	22,000	..
Matches	23	..	9,000	..
Sugar	11	..	7,000	70,000 tons
Rice Mills	110	..	4,000	..
Oil Mills	130	..	2,000	..
Cement	1	..	1,000	80,000 tons
Cigarettes	5	..	1,500	..
Paper	2	..	8,000	..
Fertilizer	4	..	2,000	..

TABLE VI  
The Budget, 1967-68 (in Rs. million)

	Centre	W. Pakistan	E. Bengal
Revenue Receipts	6384	1265	637
Share of Taxes to Province	1347	671	676
Revenue Expenditure	3802	1933	1033
Development Expenditure	5086	1828	2635
Financed by			
(a) Revenue Surplus	1234	x	280
(b) Internal Debt	320	x	194
(c) Foreign Aid	2723	x	572
(d) Others	809	x	x
(e) Central Assistance	—	x	1384

x Not available

TABLE VII  
Demographic data on the two wings

	Pakistan	East Bengal	West Pakistan
Area (Sq. miles)	365,529	55,126	310,403
Population			
(a) 1961 Census (000)	93,720	50,804	42,880
% Increase 1951-61	23.9	21.2	27.1
(b) Persons per sq. mile	256	922	138
(c) Literates (000)	14,336	8,956	5,380
% of Population	15.9	17.6	13.6
(d) Rural population (%)	86.9	94.8	77.5
Land Utilisation (1965-66)			
(a) Total area (million acres)	233.9	35.3	198.6
(b) Not reported (..)	68.0	Nil	68.0
(c) Forest	10.3	5.4	4.9
(d) Not available for cultivation	53.1	6.3	46.8
(e) Other uncultivated	32.8	1.3	31.5
(f) Cultivated area	13.4	0.7	12.7
(i) Current fallows			
(ii) Net sown area	5.6	21.6	34.7
(iii) Area sown more than once	12.4	7.9	4.5
(iv) Total cropped area	68.7	29.5	39.2

Source : Pakistan Basic Facts: 1966-67

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TABLE VIII  
Gross Provincial Product of East Pakistan (at 1959-60 factor cost)

Sectors	Years	(Rs. million)					
		East Pakistan			West Pakistan		
		1949-50	1959-60	1964-65	1949-50	1959-60	1964-65
1. Agriculture ]		8,074	9,042	10,774	6,595	7,711	9,124
(a) Crops		6,507	7,039	8,480	4,250	4,775	5,895
2. Mining & quarrying		—	—	—	27	70	115
3. Manufacturing		472	912	1,536	961	2,018	2,904
(a) Large Scale		69	406	961	277	1,159	1,927
(b) Small Scale		403	506	575	684	859	977
4. Construction		58	224	806	179	427	963
5. Electricity, gas & water		6	20	113	27	87	154
6. Transportation communication		631	900	1,188	608	921	1,238
7. Trade, finance, services etc.		3,133	3,874	5,000	3,694	5,233	6,750
8. Gross Provl. Product		12,374	14,972	19,417	12,091	16,467	21,248

Source: Khan & Bergan, Pakistan Development Review: 1966

TABLE IX  
Cargo tonnage handled at Ports\* in East Bengal: 1960-61 to 1965-66

Year	('000 Tons)		
	Imports	Exports	Total
1960-61	2,656	877	3,533
1961-62	2,779	1,121	3,900
1962-63	3,493	1,232	4,725
1963-64	4,161	1,363	5,524
1964-65	3,341	1,203	4,544
1965-66	3,717	1,416	5,133

\*Chittagong, Chalna, Mongla

TABLE X  
Rail Movement and Freight: 1960-61 to 1965-66

Year	No. of passengers carried (Thousands)	Passenger miles (millions)	Freight carried ('000 tons)	Net freight ton-miles (millions)
1961-62	72,799	1,917	6,303	974
1962-63	72,002	1,936	6,815	1,062
1963-64	73,145	2,003	6,784	1,053
1964-65	71,325	1,923	6,073	894
1965-66	67,190	1,788	5,439	856

TABLE XI

E. Bengal's value of foreign trade: 1950-61 to 1965-66

(Rs. '000)			
Year	Exports	Imports	Excess of Exports over Imports
1950-51	1,211,070	452,932	758,138
1951-52	1,086,626	763,453	323,173
1952-53	642,470	366,352	276,118
1953-54	645,068	293,760	351,308
1954-55	731,569	320,217	411,352
1955-56	1,041,291	360,686	680,605
1956-57	909,370	818,537	90,833
1957-58	988,058	735,624	252,434
1958-59	880,954	553,797	327,157
1959-60	1,079,584	655,275	424,309
1960-61	1,259,979	1,014,386	245,593
1961-62	1,300,560	872,842	427,718
1962-63	1,249,264	1,018,692	230,572
1963-64	1,224,140	1,488,521	(—) 264,381
1964-65	1,268,128	1,701,823	(—) 433,695
1965-66	1,514,218	1,328,062	186,156

Source: "East Pakistan: A systematic regional geography and its development planning aspects" by Haroun Er Rashid

TABLE XII

Commodity-wise Exports from East Bengal: 1960-61 to 1964-65

(Rs. in million)

Commodity	1960-61	1961-62	Years (July-June)		1964-65
			1962-63	1963-64	
A. To Foreign Countries					
Raw Jute	848.0	849.5	792.9	682.7	845.3
Jute Manufactures	314.0	311.9	306.0	284.3	292.3
Hides and Skins	28.6	26.6	26.3	22.9	20.0
Fish	38.3	50.9	77.7	63.8	46.0
Tea	1.1	21.2	6.4	2.1	10.0
Others	29.2	34.0	40.0	51.0	54.3
Total	1259.2	1249.1	1249.3	1106.8	1267.9
B. To West Pakistan					
Tea	109.4	116.3	152.8	164.1	185.4
Jute Manufactures	80.3	89.0	90.3	100.0	104.9
Paper and Paste Board	39.0	63.3	59.3	58.0	85.9
Matches	26.3	30.9	24.9	28.5	26.2
Leather	15.3	11.4	17.6	22.1	22.6
Others	93.2	103.3	80.0	138.5	185.2
Total:	363.5	414.2	424.9	511.2	610.2

Source: "East Pakistan: A systematic regional geography and its development planning aspects" by Haroun Er Rashid

TABLE XIII

Commodity-wise Imports into East Bengal: 1960-61 to 1965-66						
Commodity	1960-61	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64	(Rs. in million)	
					1964-65	1965-66
<b>A. From Foreign Countries</b>						
Machinery	143.8	170.4	221.3	231.8	511.2	278.7
Metals & Ores	136.1	187.7	124.2	237.4	341.6	238.6
Mineral Oils	113.1	44.5	61.8	93.4	73.8	100.4
Vegetable Oils	46.6	35.8	79.1	63.4	125.7	81.8
Coal & Coke	30.2	32.3	35.4	32.4	49.1	27.8
Vehicles	30.1	48.9	51.4	125.0	49.0	91.9
Drugs & Medicines	28.5	22.4	22.2	29.4	33.9	52.9
Textiles*	17.5	17.8	13.0	14.1	19.9	81.3
Others	468.5	313.3	329.9	591.8	497.6	374.7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,014.4</b>	<b>873.1</b>	<b>929.3</b>	<b>1,418.7</b>	<b>1,701.8</b>	<b>1,328.1</b>
<b>B. From West Pakistan</b>						
Cotton Fabrics	144.6	162.2	140.7	151.0	183.7	183.4
Cotton Yarn	140.4	146.2	100.9	94.6	78.1	102.0
Raw Cotton	86.2	81.3	68.8	82.6	81.3	136.4
Rice	56.3	2.4	118.5	99.8	13.8	147.6
Edible Oils	31.0	12.7	7.9	9.9	11.6	18.3
Boots & Shoes	8.9	11.0	8.6	5.1	2.8	4.9
Tobacco	30.1	61.2	66.2	71.2	89.5	103.7
Wheat & Flour	0.3	2.8	4.9	0.3	5.7	2.3
Others	319.3	375.3	313.5	380.9	408.0	510.0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>817.1</b>	<b>855.1</b>	<b>830.0</b>	<b>895.4</b>	<b>874.5</b>	<b>1,208.6</b>
Source: "East Pakistan: A systematic regional geography" by Haroun Er Rashid						

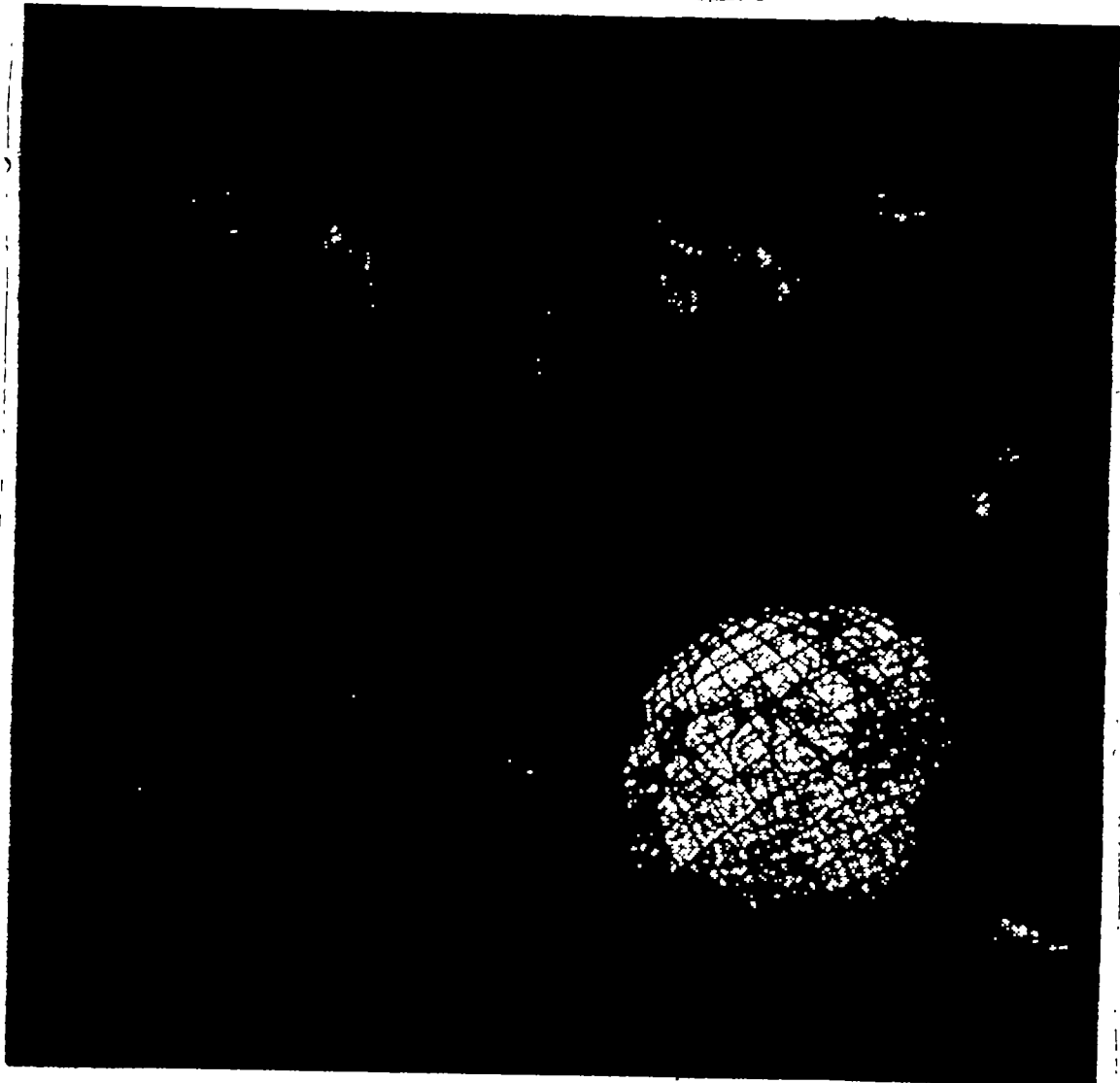
Source: "East Pakistan: A systematic regional geography" by Haroun Er Rashid

TABLE XIV  
Agriculture in East Bengal: Area and Production (1960-65 Annual Average)

	Area (Acres)	Production (Tons)
<b>I. RICE</b>		
Amon	14,518,580	6,764,750
Aus	6,319,260	2,437,266
Boro	1,041,480	499,374
<b>Total: Rice</b>	<b>21,879,320</b>	<b>9,701,390</b>
<b>II. OTHER FOODGRAINS</b>		
Wheat	148,260	36,882
Barley	68,656	15,022
Maize	17,066	5,101
<b>Total other grains</b>	<b>233,982</b>	<b>57,005</b>
<b>III. PULSES</b>		
Masur	164,544	45,732
Moog	43,054	11,734
Maah	129,136	36,614
Arhar	10,202	2,955
Gram	136,580	35,547
<b>Total Pulses</b>	<b>483,516</b>	<b>132,582</b>
<b>IV. OIL SEEDS</b>		
Rape & Mustard	536,520	96,650
Linseed	52,502	10,050
Sesamum	132,066	24,557
Groundnut	24,894	13,339
<b>V. COMMERCIAL CROPS</b>		
(a) Sugarcane	317,860	4,944,014
(b) Jute	1,732,266	6,019,377
(c) Tobacco	103,160	27,974
(d) Tea (1966)	90,000	65,000,000(lbs.)

\*Relates to textile yarns, fabrics and made up articles

Source: "East Pakistan: A systematic regional geography and its development planning aspects" by Haroun Er Rashid



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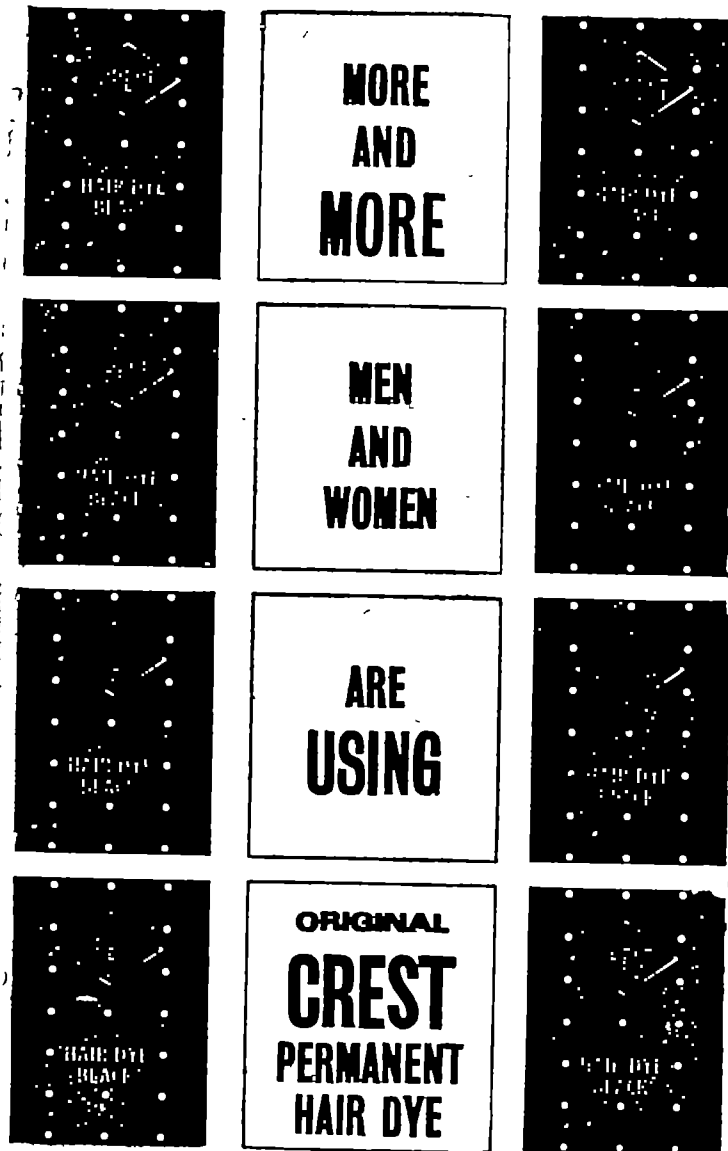
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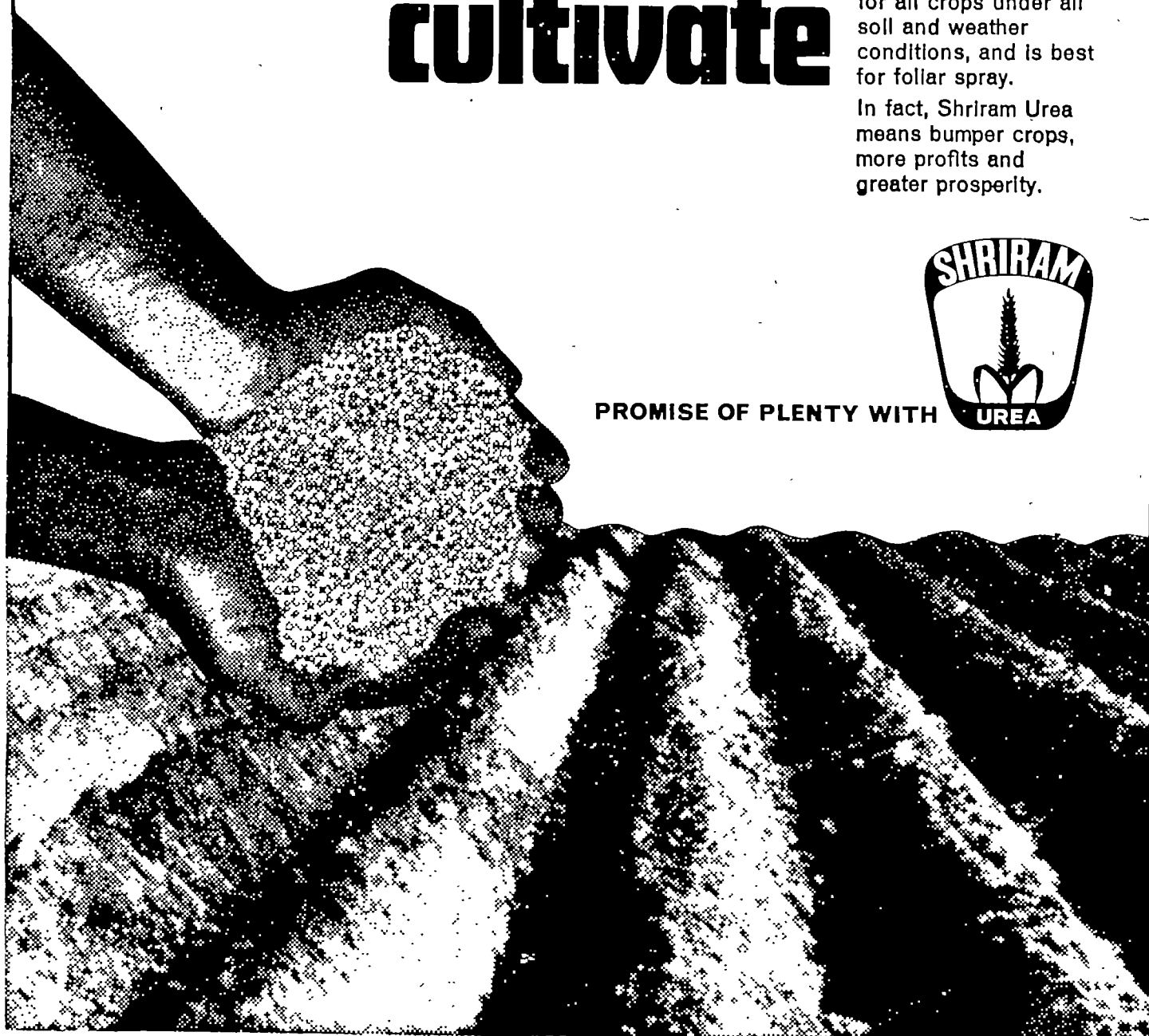
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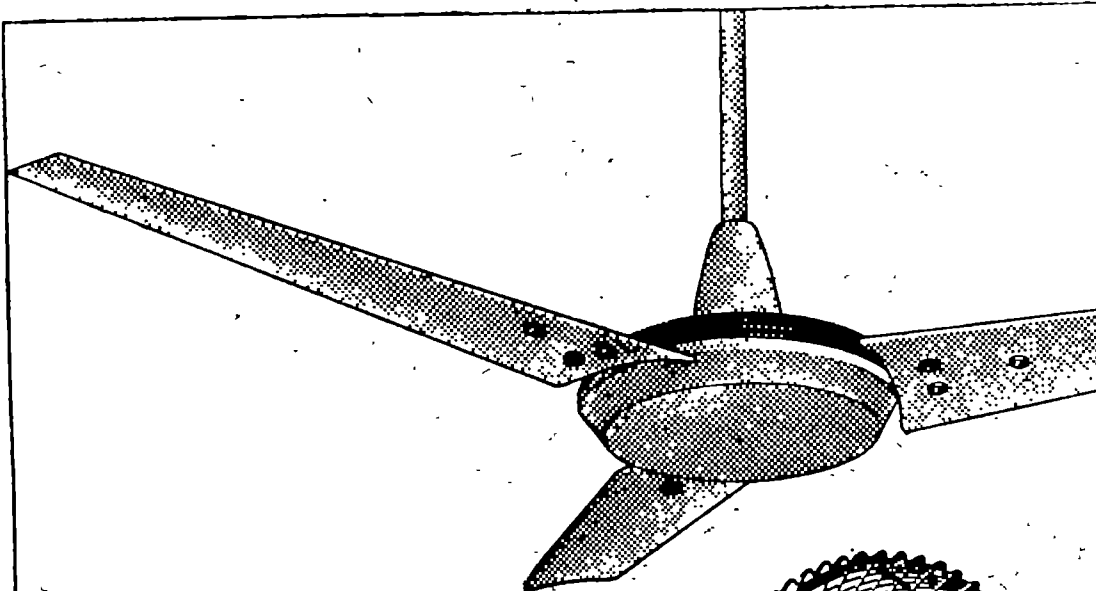
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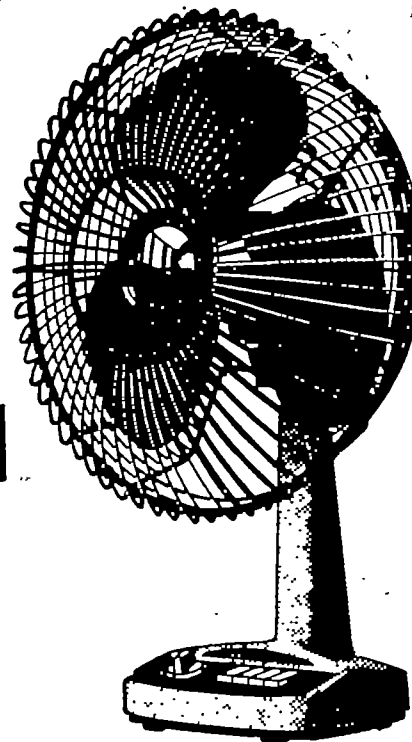
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THE  
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PARIS	5084	4189	6732	4713	5984	4189	6650	4655
PRAGUE	5984	4189	6732	4713	5984	4189	6650	4655
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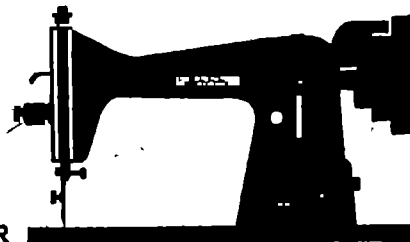
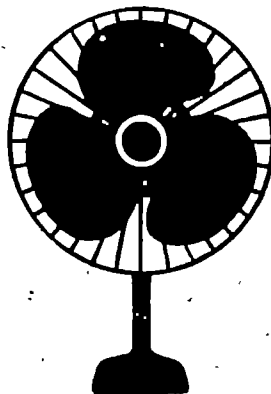




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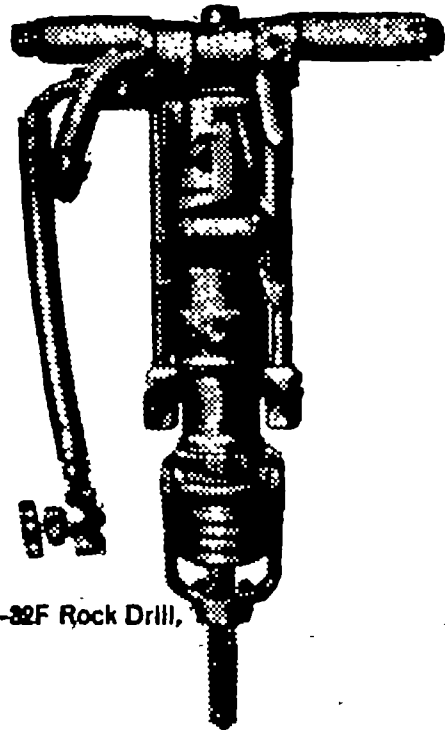
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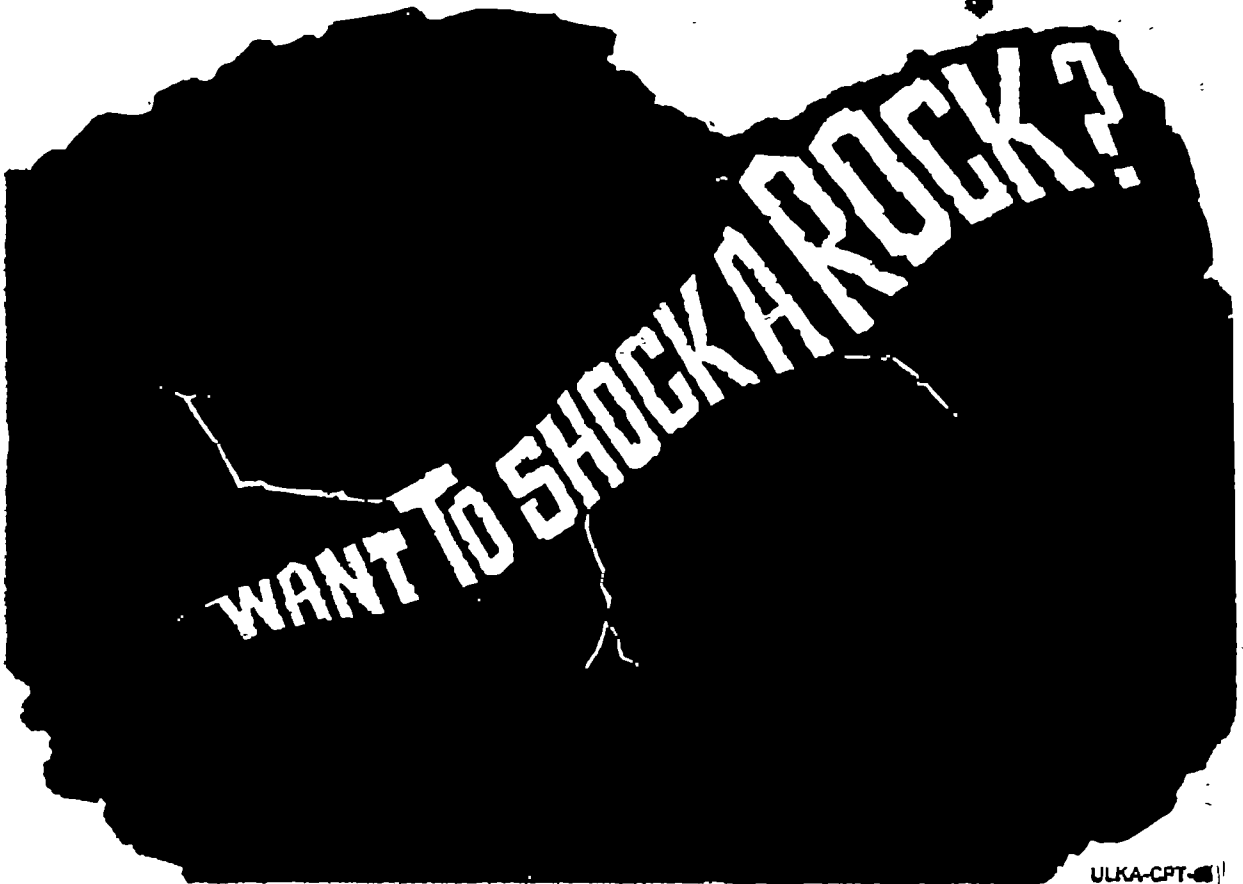
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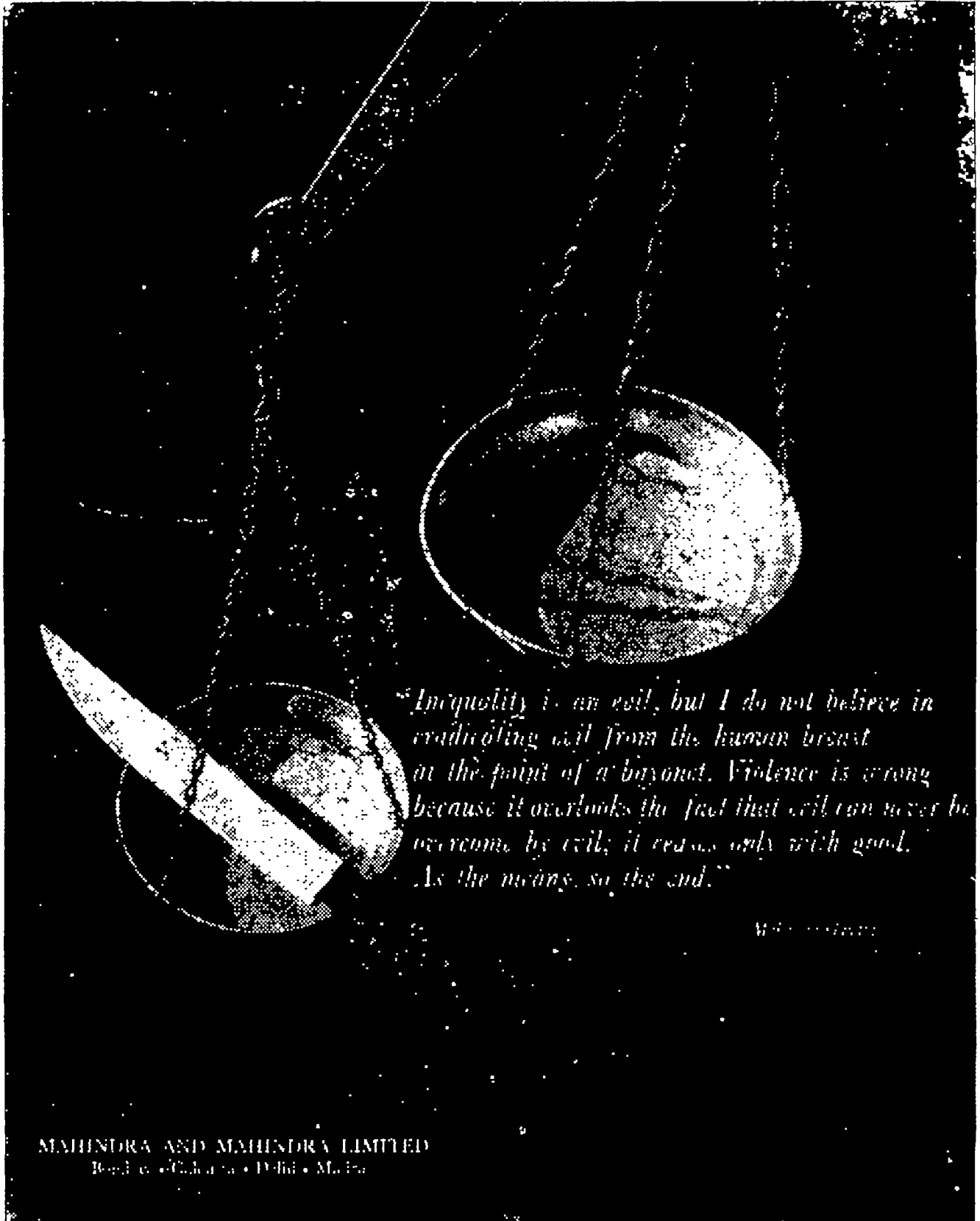
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\*Population problems—Malnutrition is the cause of more infant deaths than all other causes put together. High infant mortality encourages larger families.

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**EXT MONTH : ELECTION ANALYSIS**

# 143

## THE ECONOMIC AGENDA

a symposium on  
the possible outlines  
of a new growth model

symposium participants

### THE PROBLEM

A brief statement  
of the issues involved

### SOME OBSERVATIONS

**Sukhamoy Chakravarty**, formerly in  
the Delhi School of Economics, now  
Member, Planning Commission

### WHERE TO FROM HERE

**K. N. Raj**, economist, former Vice-  
Chancellor of Delhi University

### AGRICULTURAL POLICY

**P. C. Joshi**, Associate Fellow,  
Institute of Economic Growth,  
Delhi

### PRICE POLICY

**C. T. Kurien**, Head of the Department  
of Economics, Madras Christian College

### INDUSTRIAL LICENSING

**Ashok V. Desai**, Senior Economist  
National Council of Applied Economic  
Research

### PROJECT PLANNING

**V. V. Bhatt**, General Manager, Industrial Development  
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### BOOKS

Reviewed by **J. Krishnamurty**, **K. Sundaram**,  
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# The problem

Nineteen seventy-two will complete twenty-five years of our existence as a democratic republic. The anniversary falls at a critical time when a question-mark hangs over the methodology we have adopted for the development and modernisation of our sprawling sub-continent. The core of this methodology is composed of a number of economic concepts which underpin our mixed economy, and help constitute the growth model which now seems bankrupt. A new model of development has to be evolved, a model sparked and motivated by policies designed to foster a radically different kind of future, a future in which the mass of the people are the central concern of government. This has not been so during the past twenty-five years of alleged socialist endeavour. The generation of a mass line, the building of a new growth model, the launching of a revolution in social practice, and the mobilisation of an integrated attack on poverty, call for immense thought and preparation. Major contradictions have to be resolved within the

democratic framework of this country. Economics and politics have to march hand in hand. Productivity in industry and agriculture has to be installed as a major god-head. Privilege, whether feudal, bureaucratic or working class, has to be ironed out. The assault on all corruption has to be conducted with a new ruthlessness, corruption of all sorts, including the sophisticated forms already sanctioned by traditional value systems. Secularity, in thought and deed, has to win through. All this the new planning must achieve — or else it will only register massive failures and topple the democratic republic we have been building. Narrow ideologies, and their foreign sponsors, will have to be brushed aside. Pressure groups which seek to confuse will have to be silenced. The Indian Reality will have to become the dominant concern of thinkers, planners and implementers. Only then will the outlines of a new growth model for a meaningful, stable and assured future emerge. This issue of SEMINAR attempts to stir thinking on a politically and socially relevant economic agenda.

# Some observations

SUKHAMOY CHAKRAVARTY

ANY\* meaningful planning is distinguished from *ad hoc* policy making by a clear formulation of the socio-economic objectives as well as by an identification of the instruments of economic and political action which would be adequate to meet these objectives. Neither of the two jobs can be carried out successfully unless our

thinking on these questions is informed by a certain coherent way of looking at the central economic problems of growth and distribution, as they relate to a particular country over a given period of time.

Occasionally, such a coherent picture of the development process is presented with the help of a formal scheme of argument. It is then fashionable to call it a growth model. The 'formal' part here is, however, quite inessential.

---

\*This article is based on the author's contribution to a panel discussion that took place at the India International Centre in April, 1971.

What is critical is to identify the interrelationship of the constraints which characterize the growth process and also an understanding of the way things are likely to develop over time and how much room for manoeuvring is left for policy making. For this purpose, a study of the past performance of the country in question coupled with information obtained from a comparative analysis based on the analysis of what happened in countries similarly situated is very important.

**T**o illustrate the nature and necessity for a suitable strategy of development today, we should consider only two of the major socio-economic objectives problems that face us which have played such an important part in recent discussions. The first objective refers to the problem of generating more and fuller employment, which obviously includes reduction of underemployment. The second is the problem of reducing, even partially, the tremendous economic disparities that exist today. While there are important statistical difficulties in getting quantitative estimates of employment and underemployment, that a problem of very considerable magnitude exists cannot be denied by anyone.

Regarding the latter, the recent seminar on income distribution organized by the Indian Statistical Institute as well as the earlier work done by Minhas, Dandekar and others have helped to impress on public minds in a somewhat dramatic fashion the extent of the so-called 'poverty' that exists today even after two decades of planning. In fact, some of these economists would argue that the percentage of people living below the 'poverty line' defined by a minimum of calorie requirements, or by means of a 'reasonable norm' in the year 1967-68 was higher than the corresponding figure for the year 1960-61.

What can be done to improve matters on either of these two scores? We say 'either' since the

two problems do have some overlap and, therefore, to the extent that one is favourably influenced, the other is likely to respond somewhat positively.

To mitigate these two problems, two types of overall strategies have been very forcefully argued in public by economists and official agencies, national and international. It has often been implied that these strategies are not merely exclusive but also together exhaust all possibilities.

The first strategy, and by now a classical one, suggests that any noticeable improvement on either of the two scores mentioned earlier would require a stepping up of the growth rate to a significantly higher figure from the ones we have experienced on an average basis over the last two decades of planning. Now, the annual compound rate of growth of national income, between 54-55 and 69-70 has been 3.1 per cent measured at 1960-61 prices. The annual growth rate between 64-65 and 69-70 has been 2.3 per cent. For the last two years, we have recorded larger growth rates averaging around 5 per cent, thanks essentially to larger harvests.

According to the 4th five-year plan document, from 1966 to 1969, employment in the organized sector of the economy which covers all public sector undertakings and non-agricultural establishments in the private sector employing 10 or more workers went up from 16.19 million to 16.63 million. According to government's recent economic survey, in 1969-70, employment went up by another .4 million. During April-September 1970, the net increase in employment is of the order of 29 thousand only.

**F**rom these statistics, it is clear that over a five year period, the increase in employment in the organized sector has been no higher than 5 per cent, implying an annual rate of a little less than 1 per cent. The rate of increase in employment has, therefore, been much less than the rate of growth of output especially during the last

few years. As compared with this, the rate of growth of employment in the organized sector with a smaller coverage was of the order of 5 per cent, during the period 1961-66.

It is, of course, quite possible and not terribly difficult, to point out the reason for this discrepancy by referring to the differential rates of growth of industry and agriculture during these periods. But it should be clear that there is no unique relationship between the rate of growth of national income and the rate of growth in employment that we can safely rely on. In fact, the following comparative table collated for different countries would support the above position even more strongly.

TABLE I

Period 1947-58		
	Yearly growth rate in output	Yearly growth rate in manufacturing employment
Argentina	4.4	-2.0
Chile	5.4	1.7
Peru	6.6	4.4
Colombia	7.6	2.5
Venezuela	13.0	2.1
Mexico	6.5	0.4
India	6.8	3.3
Egypt	5.5	3.9

Source: W. Baer and M.E.A. Herve: Employment and Industrialization in Developing countries, Quarterly Journal of Economics, February, 1966.

To counteract the conclusion strongly suggested by the above table, one may point to the possible growth of employment in the tertiary sector. However, there are several difficulties here. First, it has been pointed out repeatedly in the literature that employment in the tertiary sector consists of very heterogeneous elements, which mean very different things from a functional economic point of view. Secondly, the employ-

ment in the tertiary sector contains a large amount of disguised unemployment. Finally, what is much more important, several studies as well as commonsense economic reasoning strongly indicate that the rate of expansion of employment in the tertiary sector is clearly related with the rate of growth of employment in the manufacturing sector.

We now come to the conclusion that unless employment opportunities in agriculture increase very substantially, the likely rate of growth of manufacturing production that we can have would not have much impact on improving the overall employment situation. This would, then, also suggest that projection of the rate of growth of national income alone cannot form the basis for employment planning. The crucial elements here are the rates of growth of output of certain crucial commodities, which are directly and indirectly needed for sustaining larger amounts of employment, today and in the future, and the mix of policies that is adopted.

**W**e should now discuss the relationship between the rate of growth of income and the problem of reduction in economic disparities. Consider a situation where the rate of growth of national income is maintained around 5 per cent per annum over a decade, a figure which is around 40 per cent higher than the rate of growth which we have experienced on the average over the period 1954-55 to 1969-70. If the distribution of income remains the same as today, then allowing for the rate of growth of population, the conditions of people belonging to the lowest three deciles would not perhaps come up to what some people have described as the 'minimum level of living' even after a decade of fairly rapid growth. But are there reasons to believe that the distribution of income would not itself shift with the acceleration of the growth rate itself?

Secondly, if the initial acceleration in the growth rate tends to

shift the distribution of income in the direction of the 'haves,' would it need also accentuate the social tensions and the sense of relative deprivation? Is it not, then, very likely that even a chance deviation from the growth path due to outside factors such as bad weather, etc., would lead to cumulative instability, making it impossible for the system to continue on the growth path?

**O**ur own experience of the last several years should prove instructive in this regard. We were forced in the first instance to deviate from what has been described as our planned growth trajectory for reasons beyond our control. Equally clearly, our inability to get back to our planned trajectory is due to the nature of the growth process we initiated. But for the massive increases in the level of agricultural production, the divergence today between the planned and the actual would have been catastrophically larger today.

It would, then, appear that the effect of the growth rate *per se* in reducing economic disparities is likely to be fairly small unless a massive stepping up of the growth rate is *achieved and maintained over a considerable period*. But such a massive step up in the growth rate is possible if one of the following condition holds: (a) the distribution of income shifts considerably in favour of the 'rich', (b) the government succeeds in mobilizing a larger part of currently generated surplus and deploys it productively; (c) a considerable increase in net aid can be contemplated.

In the first case, we shall have 'regressive' growth, which will mean the very rich will get the maximum benefit, and all the other in diminishing amounts, and some, none at all. In the second case, the results will depend on the mix of tax policies adopted and on the type of expenditure that is incurred. In this case, the outcome is indeterminate and can be made to come out in one way

or the other depending on political and economic circumstances. The third case is not terribly relevant to the present situation and may for the present be disregarded. However, there is by *now* quite a bit of evidence that domestic savings and foreign aid are not necessarily positively associated.

We have said enough to indicate that the 'rate of growth' strategy is by itself an inadequate device to deal with the problems of generating employment opportunities and for reducing economic disparities. Much depends on the composition of the growth process and on how growth is financed and how benefits from the growth process are distributed. Finally, one can doubt whether the growth rates measured with respect to the usual definitions of national income and related magnitudes are at all illuminating in understanding the growth process in a country like India.

**W**e should now discuss the second strategy which seeks to remedy the present state of affairs by directly operating on the distribution process. The argument here is a very old one. Production, it is held, is dictated by the laws of technology. Distribution is, however, in our hands since distribution is a man-made process. Put in this way, the argument sounds very weak. Yet, the same argument was put forward by John Stuart Mill more than one hundred years ago. He enunciated this position when he had to cope with the growing socialist opposition to the doctrines of classical economists. If the argument could have been put up in Britain of the 1840s, there is no reason why the same argument cannot be put up in India today.

How is this strategy supposed to operate? There are two situations here between which one should sharply distinguish. One would imply public ownership of land and all types of tangible reproducible wealth. The first part of the suggestion was, in fact, put up by James Mill in the early nineteenth

century and was rejected by the East India Company. The second idea, of course, is a commonplace of socialist thinking. Under these circumstances, problems of distribution are part of a single planning process. Since the problem pertaining to running such a set-up are well known, we do not need to discuss them here.

If such nationalization is not being contemplated, we have to think of two types of redistribution measures. One set can be called a 'general' set of egalitarian measures and the other set can be called the set of specific egalitarian measures. Under 'general' egalitarian measures, we rely on direct taxes and subsidies of different types. Under the second, we have to rely on specific measures including making specific commodities available to different groups of people at different prices as well as reserving spheres of production for different kinds of people, including some by the State itself.

Traditionally, economists have always preferred the first type of egalitarian measures to the second, on the ground that economic calculation gets grossly distorted under the second arrangement and would, therefore, be quite prejudicial to efficiency. This traditional basis of the economists in my opinion is quite heavily influenced by a conventional set of assumptions and would not appear to be largely valid in a country like India, which in any case, operates under a disequilibrium system. But, does this imply that our basic problem can be solved by a set of egalitarian measures, whatever may be their composition? This first objection would be that the system would break down because it would reduce the amount of savings and hence would lead to a lowering of the growth rate, thus making our problem more difficult in the future. The basis for this argument is that inequality fosters higher savings, an argument which is not necessarily correct under all circumstances.

However, this argument would be very important if the egalitarian

measure adopted reduced the growth rate below the rate at which population is growing. Since this possibility cannot by any means be ruled out, one has to be fairly cautious, to say the least. But there are other arguments which have also to be borne in mind. These arguments would relate to the way the economy is supposed to be run. If egalitarianism is taken very seriously, it follows almost inevitably that the ownership of the means of production would have to be transferred from individuals to the State or to other cooperative agencies. If capital is privately owned and if the principle under which the system is run is one of profit maximization, then the contradictions between the distribution apparatus and the production apparatus would be too great for any economic system to function effectively. What is more likely to happen is the emergence of pockets of new vested interests which are more 'equal' than the others.

All this does not mean that the scope for egalitarian measures does not exist. In fact, there are very important areas such as health, education, supply of certain essential commodities specially to certain vulnerable sections of the community where a lot of scope exists. Similarly, with respect to taxation of those sections of the community who have benefited from the process of growth but have not had to pay any price for it, we can do a great deal more than what we have done so far.

But, what is absolutely essential is to understand that in a mixed capitalist system given its rules of the game, there are some limits beyond which the production and distribution decision cannot be separated. We should by all means explore what these limits are or whether they can be stretched in one direction or the other. But, to be most effective in this connection, we should also try to understand how income is generated and appropriated in our economy, a subject on which our knowledge so far has been fairly limited. In fact, it is one of the most important

areas, where additional investment in terms of research effort will prove very rewarding for any policy that seeks to reconcile the requirements of growth with those of social justice.

The upshot of our discussion thus far has been to suggest that neither of the two broad strategies suggested taken in isolation is likely to prove adequate in dealing with our pressing social and economic problems, especially if they are taken in isolation. This is, of course, not to deny that there are valuable elements in either approach which can form parts of what may eventually constitute a more adequate strategy for economic planning. While a great deal of work needs to be done in formulating such a policy, perhaps a few essential ingredients may have to be indicated here.

First, we should recognize that the key to the solution of the problems we are faced with would be in the structural transformation of our agriculture. This would require technological transformation together with many essential institutional changes. Possibilities which would significantly step up employment opportunities in agriculture deserve the highest priority. An integrated rural works programme on a large enough scale has been discussed and is very important. But, proper instrumentalities of action have to be devised and the mobilization of resources has to be stepped up that would match the effort. It is also necessary to adopt project analysis to the requirements of such a programme.

Further, the problems of allocating the benefits accruing from such projects have to be looked into carefully. Secondly, planning of agriculture in depth would require adequate concurrent planning of investment in the industrial sector which cater to the needs of a modernized agriculture. A 5 per cent growth rate in agriculture will lead to considerable investment in industries which directly or indirectly cater to agriculture. Thirdly, stepping up of expendi-



ture on health, primary and secondary education and on public transportation in urban areas would seem to be very urgent both as redistribution devices as well as by way of investment in human beings.

**F**ourthly, the strategy of industrialization has to be freshly reviewed to increase its employment potential, as well as to increase its competitiveness with a view to building up an expanded export programme. The problem is not one of promoting inefficiency but of changing the product mix more in line with mass consumption requirements as well as allowing for more sub-contracting and similar ways of building up a modernized small-scale sector. In any case, it is also fairly clear that unless the composition of the industrial sector is changed, we are unlikely to succeed in raising the rate of growth of industrial production from the current levels of 5 to 6 per cent to anything near 10 per cent per annum.

Fifthly, since the expected correlation between the rate of growth of capacity of domestic capital goods production and the increase in the rate of savings has not proved correct, the question of domestic resource mobilization and the problem of stepping up the rate of saving have to be looked into much more carefully.

Sixthly, the potentially big question of making technological change a matter of planning and policy should deserve a much greater degree of attention than it has hitherto received. Here, again, accent should be laid on products which constitute a large chunk of our consumption or happen to be strategic from the point of view of the production process. For example, technological breakthroughs in the process of producing certain agricultural commodities, and in the designing of houses and associated construction activities would appear to be very important.

There is no doubt that a broad programme of the sort roughly

stretched above would require that the domestic investment rates would have to be stepped up from the low levels of 11 to 12 per cent to which they have fallen over the last few years. Further, it would require that public investment on men and machines would have to be substantially stepped up from the levels they have reached in the recent past. There is some fear that such a stepping up of public investment expenditure will prove inflationary in character. This, however, would appear to be too pessimistic an assumption. There is considerable slack in the system today and a 'taut' planning which does not depend on the notion that the current rate of saving acts like a 'sound' barrier to any programme of accelerated effort is likely to work provided certain normal safeguards are observed and contingency plans are prepared ahead of time.

**T**o sum up, we can say that a strategy for growth in India today cannot rely on a simple solution, based on identifying a single set of issues as critical. It has to take into account the inter-relationships between political, social and economic variables. Ideal solutions do not exist, but even a partial solution has to reconcile a large number of conflicting considerations including the diverse nature of requirements arising from different regions. But the principal accent of any strategy should be to operate on the process of growth and distribution simultaneously. The success of our planning and policy making would lie in striking the requisite balance, which would, in fact, continue to shift over time. To do all this successfully, we would, of course, need to *understand* the system in its multifold functioning as well as to anticipate the way it is likely to change over time. Modifying Marx in today's context, we can say, 'Politicians and planners have tried always to change the world; their first task would be to understand it.'

# Where to from here?

K. N. RAJ

PLANNING needs technical expertise but it is essentially a political process. So, whatever one proposes in regard to planning must not only be based on certain political premises but be capable of being translated into practice. On the other hand, there is a danger in accepting all the political constraints of a particular situation. For, it might end up in proposing policies and programmes which are totally inadequate for dealing with the emerging problems. Nor should one take a static view of political forces, particularly in the kind of situation which prevails in India today. It is therefore legitimate to view planning policies and methods as a means of giving direction to desirable political changes in the future. But this too would require making certain

assumptions of a political nature.

What kind of political assumptions one ought to be making is however by no means clear. It depends in part on the interpretation one places on the results of the recent general elections. Was the swing in voting merely an endorsement of the policies and programmes set out in the election manifesto of the New Congress—which was on the whole pitched at a low key—or did it signify something more?

It is difficult to be sure, but it appears highly probable that the electorate had neither heard about the party's election manifesto nor bothered very much about it; and that the support it gave to the party was mainly on account of the radical image projected by Mrs. Gandhi and the far-reaching social and economic changes she

seemed to stand for. If this reading is correct, not only has it some important implications for planning and economic policies in general, but action along certain lines cannot be shirked for long without serious political consequences. These consequences may show up fairly soon and (as has been recently demonstrated in Ceylon) may not wait for the next elections to come to the surface.

Implicit in the party's election manifesto was a diagnosis of the situation which one can read between the lines. This can be very briefly summarized. It is that on the whole the economy has been doing not too badly; that the policies initiated towards the middle 'sixties were in the right direction and have paid off; that the green revolution in particular has given a much-needed boost to the rate of growth of the economy; and that, together with the improvement in the balance of payments position, it is possible to accelerate it further. There are, of course, some things that have gone wrong, but these can be set right without any major changes in the methods of planning or in the economic policy package taken as a whole.

**M**ore specifically, the manifesto seems to have recognized that the growth process had not generated enough employment opportunities; that the unemployment among the 'educated' was assuming dangerous proportions; that the rich had grown a lot richer (even if others had also improved their position somewhat); and that poverty was still acute and widespread. But these problems, it appears to have been assumed are much too deep-rooted for quick solutions to be found for them. So all that can and need be done, it has been concluded, is to make the growth process more broad-based through more systematic and imaginative exploitation of modern science and technology and improvements in credit and marketing arrangements; work out more or less *ad hoc* employment programmes for taking the edge off the more acute (and politically dangerous) manifestations of un-

employment; inject some doses of 'social justice' through selected welfare schemes with popular appeal; serve it all up in appropriately radical phraseology; and silence even the idealogues by an occasional act or two of nationalization in the name of one thing or another.

**T**his is undoubtedly a perceptive and shrewd approach, and one cannot rule out the possibility that it might work. But the odds are against it. The reason is partly that some of its basic premises are wrong and partly that it does not go deep enough.

For one thing, contrary to the general belief, the green revolution has not perceptibly accelerated the growth rate even in agriculture. As will be obvious at a glance from the data relating to the last decade and a half it has made a difference only to the growth rate of wheat production (which accounts for but a small part of total agricultural output).<sup>1</sup> Essentially, the 'New Agricultural Strategy' has been changing only the sources of growth, not the rate of growth itself.<sup>2</sup> This is not to under-rate what has been achieved

but a plea for not being carried away into flights of fancy about the rates of growth that have been or could be attained in the near future.

The rate of growth of national income in India has been about 4 per cent per annum for some time, with year-to-year fluctuations around this trend line. For the same reason that the green revolution has not yet brought about a perceptible acceleration of the growth rate in agriculture, there is no clear evidence so far of an upward shift in the trend for the economy as a whole. No doubt it will get shifted up as one succeeds in making the growth process more broad-based. But, as the experience with the new agricultural strategy has demonstrated only too well, it is one thing to have the know-how for accelerated growth in particular sectors, another to spread it widely and rapidly enough to promote a broad-based process of development reflecting itself in significantly higher rates of growth.

**T**aking into account the high rates of illiteracy still prevailing in large parts of the country (more particularly in Central and North India), the shortages of foreign exchange that are likely to show up within the next year or two, the extremely limited progress made so far even in regard to surveying of sub-soil water availability in different regions, the large and time-consuming investments needed for more efficient water management in general, and numerous other such constraints, it is wholly unrealistic to expect that the growth rate of the economy can be raised much above 5 to 5½ per cent per annum during the 'seventies taken as a whole. In fact, the country will have done well if an acceleration of this order is achieved.

Nor is there any valid reason to be depressed by such a prospect. For a country of India's size and diversity, it is indeed a very impressive rate. As those who are familiar with the performance of the Chinese economy know very

1. Summarized below are the data relating to some of the years of high foodgrain output — when the seasons happened to be relatively favourable — during this period:

	1955-56	1961-62	1964-65	1969-70
	(in million tonnes)			
Wheat	8.9	12.1	12.3	20.0
Rice	28.7	35.8	39.3	40.4
Other foodgrains	31.6	34.8	37.7	39.1
All foodgrains	69.2	82.7	89.3	99.5

The reported foodgrains output of 106 million tonnes in 1970-71 is unlikely to make any difference to the references one could draw about trends from the above data. (The impact of the New Agricultural Strategy on production trends in the broad category of 'non-foodgrains' has been even less impressive.)

2. For a fuller analysis of the relevant issues, and of the reasons for being cautious in accepting some of the claims of the green revolution enthusiasts (particularly the propagandists among them), see my paper on 'Some Questions concerning Growth, Transformation and Planning of Agriculture in the Developing Countries', *Journal of Development Planning* (United Nations), Vol. I (1969). Reprints of this paper are available in the office of the Department of Economics, Delhi School of Economics.

well, it is extremely doubtful whether it has achieved anything more in this particular respect; possibly, what has been achieved in terms of growth of production has been even less. Needless to say, comparisons with the performance of small 'island' economies like Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea are almost wholly irrelevant.

**T**he main failure of Indian planning so far is not really in this area of growth rates, as those who tend to equate development merely with growth of production would have us believe. Development has many other dimensions, not all of which are easily measurable but which nevertheless are vital to any process of broad-based social and economic transformation.

No development programme can proceed very far unless (a) it is based on the identification of problems, big and small, at the grass-root level; (b) there are changes in the social and economic structure which are significant enough to release millions of poor people from the lethargy and inhibitions created over centuries and give them an opportunity to hope and work for a better life; and (c) the potentialities for finding partial or complete solutions to the problems of these people by mobilizing local resources are fully exploited.

None of these can be achieved by highly centralized macro-planning of the kind India has had so far. Most of its failures in matters such as land reform, unemployment and even literacy can be traced in large part to the lack of a machinery and system of planning based on a fuller recognition of what can be achieved through greater and more genuine political and administrative decentralization. Further research for studying and quantifying the dimensions of these problems is likely to produce very little unless there is a change in the basic approach itself.

The late Professor Gadgil had a clear appreciation of this aspect

of the problem, as will be evident from the following extracts taken from the Kale Memorial Lecture on 'District Development Planning' delivered by him in 1966:

'The almost entire absence of proper planning at the State and district level has imposed a grave handicap on development of Indian rural economy and is reflected in the relatively slow and patchy progress in agriculture, rural industry and related fields. Problems of planning in agriculture have been discussed by a number of official committees and there has been general emphasis on the need for relating targets and programmes to local circumstances. This, however, cannot be done *ad hoc* or piecemeal and can only follow appropriate organization of state and district development planning. The situation today is thus that where improvement is attainable through programmes involving simple uniform action over a wide area success is achieved; where, however, close study of particular complex problems is necessary for progress, the problems are either unidentified or are dealt with inadequately.

'... apart from the limited extent to which technical considerations dictated a certain pattern of the plan and the order of priorities in them, the pattern and the priorities will have to be determined in relation to local choices and opinions. It is true that in a number of directions the margin of such choice would not be wide. The objectives determined, the allocation of funds, the choice of agencies, etc., made at superior levels would impose certain constraints on district planning. Other constraints would be where technical or economic considerations definitely pointed in certain directions. Even though the margin of choice for local decisions might thus, in particular contexts, be small, it is important that within this margin the choice should be

made locally and, moreover, that a full understanding of the why and wherefore of the constraints as described above and their relevance to local choice, are understood by the people concerned.

'The concept of additional rural works of the Planning Commission is illogical and merely shows up the failure to plan adequately. The contents of a rural works programme cannot be of a type different from those included in the programme of providing socio-economic overheads or of conservation and development of resources or the maintenance of these or of existing works. It is obvious that a rural works programme which is conceived of as additive will not be properly integrated with planned programmes and will to that extent be wasteful of resources.'

It is not therefore surprising that one of Professor Gadgil's major preoccupations during his tenure in the Planning Commission was to introduce some kind of system and order into the methods of transfer of financial resources from the Centre to the States and remove the elements of arbitrariness and uncertainty (not to mention of patronage) which have characterized such transfers in the last two decades. This is not a matter that by itself would seem to warrant such special attention but it is undoubtedly an essential pre-condition for a number of other important reforms in planning. Unless the States know how much resources are likely to be available to it from the Centre, for what purposes, under what conditions, and what precisely is the *quid pro quo* in each case, they cannot take the first steps towards any kind of meaningful planning of the kind indicated.

**U**nfortunately, the position in this vital area of Centre-State relations, on which so much else hinges, is still extremely unsatisfactory. The arrangements in existence hitherto have resulted in the total debt of States rising

rapidly to over Rs. 8000 crores, of which three-fourths represent indebtedness to the Centre. States have taken recourse to borrowing on this scale often for the simple reason that, even for purposes which could not possibly yield additional income to them for repayment of loans, Central assistance was not available in any other form. The total tax revenue of the States, including their statutory share of the Central taxes, is not now much more than Rs. 2000 crores or so.

Naturally, with a large accumulated debt (four times as large as this annual tax revenue), a large part of the fresh non-statutory loans and grants the States now receive each year have to be transferred back as repayments of the principal and interest on the loans taken earlier from the Centre. Successive Finance Commissions have drawn attention to this problem but the Centre has chosen to turn a blind eye to it so far.

Under such circumstances, the States cannot be expected to develop serious interest in any kind of meaningful and realistic planning from below.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore necessary to examine fully and in depth, without further delay, the whole set of questions relating to the financial arrangements between the Centre, the States and the various local authorities (more particularly the Zilla Parishads) and, side by side, the possible ways of re-ordering their respective functions and responsibilities in regard to developmental activities. Only then will it become possible to make meaningful experiments with genuinely decentralized planning and to mobilize the latent social and political

forces in the countryside for grappling with the various problems of promoting a broad-based process of development.

With most of the States once again under the control of a single political party, and some kind of working relationships between the Centre and the States therefore easier to establish than before, there may be a tendency to leave alone for a while all basic issues involving Centre-State relations. Proposals which seem to call for, or even imply, a loosening of Central control might even be treated with suspicion and frowned upon. One must hope however that the response will be less stereo-typed and more imaginative; for what is now a great opportunity for improving the entire machinery of planning and making it more meaningful socially and politically can, if ignored, become later a serious menace to the unity of the country itself.

Another important pre-condition for the developmental process to be a solvent rather than a source of social and political tension is that those who gain most from economic growth and have greater capacity to bear its costs must be made to contribute much more than they do now to sustain and expand the various activities associated with development. As experience shows, this is easier said than done. A great deal has been said and written on this subject—and it is not necessary to add to it here—but what has been witnessed by way of action so far (including the proposals made in the latest budget) amounts to little more than shadow-boxing to impress the multitude.

For, whether it is taxation of income or of wealth, it is meaningless to have apparently high rates of tax after building into the system loopholes large enough for elephants to pass through. But this has become standard practice, and apparently one for which Finance Ministers do not feel either ashamed nor are taken to task for by the otherwise articulate radicals in the Parliament.

As Professor Gulati has pointed out, the continued recognition given by the tax authorities to the institution of the Hindu Undivided Family, the numerous exemptions provided for in respect of taxation of income and wealth, and the freedom given to tax-payers in these brackets not even to declare their agricultural income and wealth in the statements submitted by them on their 'world' income and wealth, are all convenient devices by which most individuals who might otherwise have to pay the high rates of taxation that are there on paper are enabled not to do so by wholly 'legal' manipulations. This is where the class biases of the politicians show through—almost irrespective of what they profess—and which makes it difficult to take seriously most of the brave statements that are being made about taxing the rich and helping the poor.

But, if there is less posturing and more sincerity in matters such as this, taxation of wealth can be made into a major source of revenue for the government—and the whole tax structure made truly more broad-based—with even lower rates of tax than are in theory leviable now. With a comprehensive system of taxation of wealth it will also become easier to devise and finance schemes for mobilising unemployed and under-employed labour. As Professor Minhas has suggested, such labour could be utilized productively for various kinds of land improvement as well as other similar purposes. But, what these and other such proposals need for being capable of implementation on a large enough scale is a technique by which the increase in the value of privately-owned assets brought about by such use of manpower for developmental activity can be made the basis of financing most or at least a large part of the necessary expenditure.

This is what a broad-based system of taxation of wealth, even at seemingly low rates, can provide. To the extent that taxation of wealth can be made progressive,

3 Apart from the need to sort out quickly the problems arising from the rapid growth in the indebtedness of the States, in order that meaningful decentralization of planning can be attempted, those who believe that the existing system makes it possible for the Centre to have tight control over the States should perhaps be reminded of a quip of Lord Keynes in the context of Britain's growing indebtedness. 'If I owe you £1,000 it is I who should be worrying about it', he said, 'but if I owe you £1 million the concern should be yours'!

one can also weave into programmes for land consolidation and development some devices for redistribution of land itself.

A major pre-requisite for taxation of wealth to be able to serve these larger purposes is that it should be administered on an all-India scale, in order to minimize the scope for evasion. Some changes in the constitutional provisions regarding taxation of agricultural income and wealth will also be necessary. But all this, and perhaps more, will become politically acceptable if, as a part of the review of Centre-State financial and other arrangements, the proceeds of the tax from this source are distributed entirely among the States—perhaps even earmarked for employment and land development programmes framed by district-level planners—and the benefits of these proposals made clear by their being made part of a much larger policy package along the lines indicated above.

There are several other proposals, even more specific in character, which one could make to give a new orientation to planning and to make it more effective for attaining the desired social goals. But what has to be considered first is whether action along these lines is politically feasible or whether the social composition of the party in power is likely to come in the way. Since there has been no marked change in the social base of the New Congress the temptation and pressures to adopt policies and programmes which raise fewer hornets' nests might be great. The reform of planning might then well begin and end with some changes in the composition of the Planning Commission; for even fresh blood can lose its vitality and regenerative power very rapidly unless its infusion is supported by clear diagnosis of the malady and it is part of a reasonably well-defined course of treatment going beyond a mere change of doctors. One can of course throw all the blame once again on the doctors!

## Agricultural policy

P. C. JOSHI

GROWTH with social justice has emerged as the new guide-line of economic policy in the recent period. The implicit basis of the

agricultural strategy during the last few years was 'growth first, social justice next' or 'social justice via growth'. The idea of 'growth with social justice' is a break from the old approach and thus calls for a reorientation of agricultural policy. This reorientation raises three important questions.

(i) What are the political and economic factors compelling a shift in approach to the question of development?

(ii) Is the conflict of growth and social justice inherent in the very process of economic development? To what extent is it independent of and to what extent is it conditioned by the existing property relations and the power-balance?

(iii) What are the elements of a new agricultural policy consistent with changing political imperatives?

In two of our earlier articles<sup>1</sup> we presented the main features of the political process in India and their influence on policy-making for the rural sector. Here we restate and develop the main argument, keeping in view the recent political developments.

A new feature of the social situation in the countryside now is the sharp accentuation of discontent among the rural poor. Even though discontent existed in the earlier period, it is now a factor to be reckoned with by the political elite. More importantly, it is a cause for anxiety to the ruling sections of the political elite. The recent shift in emphasis

from *growth to social-justice-oriented-growth* is to a very large extent a consequence of the threat to political stability sensed by the ruling elite from the rising discontent of the rural poor. Here is a good illustration of the functional significance of social unrest in creating the possibility of policy re-orientations.

Without denying the importance of this new element of the political situation, one should not at the same time overestimate its actual impact on policy as distinguished from its impact on political ideology. Increasing discontent of the rural poor is inducing once again radicalism in ideology without yet leading to radicalism in policy. Ideology is a means of political image-building and support-mobilisation while policy relates to an action-programme. A radical thrust in the realm of policy is not yet in sight largely because the discontent of the poor is yet too diffused and amorphous to emerge as a decisive political force and to compel a real shift in economic priorities and programmes.

There is no doubt that there has been a great tension and ferment in the Indian political system in the recent period as reflected in the splits and divisions in the leading political parties and the confrontation among the radicals and the conservatives within each political party. In these divisions and splits, one group has fought the other group in the name of the poor in general and the rural poor in particular. In the recent mid-term poll itself there was a massive appeal to the rural poor from all sides. But have these developments brought about a decisive shift in the power balance in favour of the rural poor?

Myrdal in his latest work entitled 'The Challenge of World Poverty' (1970) has argued that in most underdeveloped countries including India: 'Power almost always belongs to varying factions of the upper class taken in its

wider meaning as including the so-called middle class' (p. 416).

Further, he has characterised the conflict between the radicals and the conservatives in the Congress leading finally to a split as reflection of in-fighting within the upper class rather than of polarisation of the masses against the upper classes. (p. 424.)

Myrdal's analysis has tended to underplay the cleavage between the intermediate class and upper class in the Indian situation which is too real to be ignored and which has provided the main motive force of economic and political developments in the recent period. Myrdal's analysis, however, is unassailable in so far as it brings out the weaknesses of the rural poor as an organised pressure group or a political force. But the more important point unemphasised by Myrdal is that the conflict of interest between the intermediate class and the upper class is fought out at the political level in the name of the poor. In fact, the intermediate class presses into service radical slogans of socialism, etc., to mobilise the discontent of the poor in its fight against the upper class. This provides an explanation of the paradox of Indian politics—indicated but not explained by Myrdal—viz., 'use of radical and often revolutionary slogans on the one hand but the resort to policies which are piecemeal and gradualist in the extreme' (p. 416).

The political-economic background presented above is intended to bring out the scope and the limits of policy reorientation in agriculture in the interest of the rural poor under the power situation as it obtains even after the dramatic developments of the last two years.

The very ambiguity of the concept of growth with social justice reflects that the power situation has not yet undergone a shift in favour of the poor. At best, the political process has only begun to take note of the increasing

1. (i) P.C. Joshi, 'Emergence of Poor Peasants and Landless Labourers as a Political Force', *Times of India*, August 15, 1970.

(ii) . . . ., 'Rural Base And Power, India 1970', *Seminar*, January 1970.

It is fruitful to begin any discussion of growth with a discussion of political assumptions and premises. This, however, is not the procedure adopted by many economists. For instance, the very perceptive and illuminating piece by Sukhamoy Chakravarty, in *Seminar* (No. 138) on 'Growth with Social Justice' does not have much to say on the politics of development.

dissatisfaction of the rural poor. Thus, the concept of 'growth with social justice' represents a political advance only in so far as it indicates the rejection of the idea of 'growth first, social justice next' by the political process as a whole. But the concept of 'growth with social justice' is loaded against the poor in so far as it maintains an ambiguity in regard to the question of structural change; in fact it is a subtle device to bypass the question of change in the structure of property and power.

In our view, the conflict between growth and social justice is to an important extent the product of a strategy of growth without structural change (or, to be more precise, of growth with minimum structural change). This brings us to the second question posed at the beginning of this article.

**I**s the conflict of growth and social justice inherent in the very process of economic development? To what extent is it independent of and to what extent is it conditioned by the existing property relations and the power-balance?

These questions are not generally posed very explicitly either in social science or in politics. But one of the unexamined assumptions which implicitly underlies scientific study as well as policy-making emphasises the inevitable conflict between growth and social justice. One seldom comes across analysis or observations exploring or emphasising complementarity between growth and social justice.<sup>2</sup>

The view that simultaneous pursuit of growth and equity is to have neither of them or that growth and equity can be had in two distinct stages is a view which has acquired by now the power of a religious faith among the entire thinking and articulate section of the Indian society. And there is no prospect for any serious attention to the poor in a country like India without an attack on this premise and on its crude and sub-

tle manifestations both at the political and intellectual levels. Both social science and politics based on such a premise have a built-in bias against the poor. In order to create preconditions for growth favourable to the poor the premise of conflict between growth and justice has to be abandoned for the alternative premise of complementarity between growth and social justice.

**O**n what logical or empirical basis is this premise of conflict between growth and equity based? The logical link between the two is provided by the concept of property rights. The argument runs as follows: Equity requires interference with property rights, that is to say, the rights of the dominant propertied classes, the very classes which are the engines of growth and development. To disturb property arrangements, therefore, is to deprive society of the propellers of the growth process. Equity therefore should not take the form of attack on property rights but should wait till sufficient wealth has been created by the propertied classes, a part of which can be distributed among the poor. This is as it were a basic axiom of economic science.

In his 'Principles of Economics', Alfred Marshall takes pains to argue that economics is not anti-poor in its fundamental orientation but is the very opposite of it. If economics is not enthusiastic about interference with property rights, it is not because the rights of property as such have been venerated by those who have built up economic science. It is because in the past property rights 'have been inseparable from solid progress' and that the masters of economics science 'would not assume the responsibility of advocating rapid advances on untried paths for the safety of which the only guarantees offered were the confident hopes of men whose imaginations were eager but not steadied by knowledge nor disciplined by hard thought.' (Principles of Economics; Vol. I, pp. 47-48).

How far is this generalisation about propertied classes as the

engines of economic progress valid for countries like India? Or even for the countries of Western Europe?

It may be remarked here in passing that not all property rights were sacred and sacrosanct in the West during the great transition from feudalism to capitalism. Feudal property rights were ruthlessly expropriated to create bourgeois property rights and the Enclosure movement was based on the expropriation on a colossal scale of peasant rights.

But the more crucial area of enquiry is: how far does the view of propertied classes as engines of growth correspond with the real situation in countries like India? What type of property is functional to growth and what type is not?

Our main argument is that the property structure in Indian agriculture is still to a considerable extent dominated by an upper class, which is quasi-feudal and quasi-capitalist. And the continuance of such a class as the dominant force involves simultaneously a colossal sacrifice of growth potential<sup>3</sup> as well as enormous inequity for the masses. To disturb the property rights of such a class is simultaneously to promote growth and equity.

What is suggested here is an end to the concentration of property rights in land specially landlord property rights and the widest diffusion of property rights among

2. Among Western social scientists Myrdal's work is exceptional and unique rather than typical in this respect.

3. What we have in mind is dramatised by the publicity given to the stupendous waste of wealth by a member of the new aristocracy in Maharashtra. In the press recently there was a report about the marriage ceremony of the son and daughter of a big agricultural entrepreneur-cum-sugar manufacturer-cum-political leader from district Sholapur which was attended by lacs of people including top luminaries of Central and State governments. It is said that the marriage procession was headed by 11 batches of band parties drawn from several districts and 40,000 people were marching in the procession. The vast scale on which the marriage was celebrated is typical of the conspicuous consumption practised by the new rich of the rural society in almost all parts of the country. (Source: *Link*, June 6, 1971, p. 23).



peasant producers. These would accelerate growth via social modernisation, or, in other words, via attack on parasitism and conspicuous consumption and incentives for a productive orientation among the labouring masses of society. They would also be promoting equity via restructuring of the power structure, i.e., by putting an end to the power concentration in the landlord class and thus to the right to engage in social and economic exploitation of the rural masses.

In short, in a society where the working peasants constitute the overwhelming majority, it is not possible to harmonise growth with equity without making these *working peasants* rather than the *big land holders* the prime vehicle of agricultural transformation. The big land holder-based strategy of agricultural growth is a strategy accentuating conflict between growth and equity. In a separate contribution in *Seminar on Land Hunger* we have suggested how the big land holder-based agricultural transformation under the impact of new technology has by and large not benefitted the small agricultural producers and the agricultural labourers. Far from making them the beneficiaries of a new prosperity, it has even brought about the erosion of the security system for the poor which was part of the old agrarian structure.

The phenomenon of growing land and credit hunger tends to confirm that growth has been achieved not only by aggravating inequality but by adversely affecting the old livelihood patterns of the rural poor. [Was not this the classical pattern of economic growth? He who hath shall have more and from him that hath little, even that will be taken away'. See, Myrdal: *Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions*.]

In contrast, the peasant-based agricultural strategy is a strategy of harmonising growth with equity. Equity is built into the growth process through this latter strategy while the growth process itself received a tremendous impetus

from equity. In other words, this strategy enlarges the area of complementarity between growth and equity.

To say that growth is compatible with equity is not to say that growth can be had without sacrifice. The point is that the existence of a quasi-feudal, quasi-capitalist landed class engaged in reckless conspicuous consumption enormously whets the consumption appetite even of the lower classes. After all, they provide the model to be emulated by the lower classes. And drastic curbing of the property rights of this landed class creates the economic as well as the moral and political basis for preparing the total rural society for a massive programme of growth in which they are both partners as well as beneficiaries.

This brings us to our next question. What are the basic elements of a new policy of growth with equity through reliance on *peasant agriculture* rather than capitalist or collective farming for economic development.

It must be said that this is a challenging field for creativity and innovation both at the scientific and political plane. This is because the common premise of classical capitalist and socialist models of development is the incompatibility of peasant agriculture with the demands of economic development. It is our contention that in the over-populated and labour-surplus economies of the third world, a capitalist or collectivist agriculture is bound to result in an explosive social situation by threatening the livelihood of vast numbers of small producers without creating alternative forms of employment. Peasant agriculture alone can make it possible to convert what at the first instance appears as a colossal liability, viz., surplus labour into an asset by making it the means of productivity augmentation per unit of land and by extremely discriminating and economical use of another scare factor, viz., capital.

The relevant questions then for a new growth strategy for agricul-

ture are basically three.

(a) How to make peasant agriculture yield the required increases in agricultural output?

(b) How to make peasant agriculture yield the required increases both in physical as well as value terms so as to feed the non-agricultural population and to contribute to resource mobilisation?

(c) Thirdly, what kind of non-agricultural development has to be combined with peasant agriculture so as to meet the employment requirements of a labour-surplus economy?

These questions open up a vast field for research as an aid to policy. In this article a few observations are offered only on the first question.

The question of agricultural growth policy based on peasant agriculture can be further broken up into the following crucial problem areas:

(a) A peasant-oriented, specially poor-peasant-oriented, land and credit policy; and suitable changes in property laws and Centre-State coordination for realising the policy aims;

(b) Planning of multi-stage technologies beginning from lower level technologies based on increased water availability leading to reduction in crop fluctuations and multiple-cropping to advanced level technology based on integrated use of seed varieties, water and fertiliser; planning also of land-saving rather than labour-saving mechanisation;

(c) Development of non-farm sectors of the peasant economy including animal husbandry which is ancillary to agriculture and other new avenues which are not;

(d) Development of the infrastructure of roads and communications and electrifications and of service cooperatives and administrative agencies;

(e) A growth-oriented educational policy leading to mass adult literacy and primary edu-

cation at lower levels on a time bound basis;

(f) Restructuring of the power system and of rural institutions in favour of the rural poor; strengthening specially of peasant organisation and associations of agricultural labour enhancing their bargaining power;

(g) Development of new industries producing mass consumption goods for the vast numbers of small producers in agriculture and a mechanism of exchange of surplus agricultural produce for non-agricultural goods.

It must be stressed that the starting point of peasant-oriented growth policy for agriculture is the restructuring of land relations in favour of the working peasants. The aim of such a policy has to be the strengthening of peasant property and drastic curbing of big land holdings which are not based *mainly* on family labour but *mainly* on labour of the peasants either as tenants or as agricultural labourers. The enforcement of this simple principle marks the decisive beginning of a vast transformation in the rural sector—a transformation which is total, embracing economic growth, social modernisation, mass welfare and democratisation of rural society.

In under-developed countries like India, social science has generally followed a conservative course. It has been hesitant to launch upon 'untried paths'. Politics alone has the potential of greater dynamism of thought and action. It can stimulate social science also to innovate in the realm of thought and, through studies in depth, provide the theoretical and empirical basis for a peasant-oriented growth policy.

The awakening of the peasant has brought to the fore the question of peasant-based development. Even then formidable vested interests exist both at the intellectual and political levels thwarting the beginning of a new process. But it is one of those fields in which it may be hard to make a beginning but will certainly be easier to continue.

## Price policy

C. T. KURIEN

ANY attempt to plan an economy, whatever may be the complexion of the plan, calls for a coherent price policy as part of the total instruments of planning. This is because, for better or for worse, planning constitutes an interference with the price system and price structure that would have prevailed in the economy but for the plan. If that interference is a carefully worked out scheme to use the price mechanism to serve the ends of planning, there is a good chance of it being successful. On the other hand, if the interference turns out to be accidental and haphazard it is almost certain to spell the failure of the plan itself. This is inevitable because

there is a certain order about the price system consisting of the network of relationships in an economy. Partial interference with that order can only lead to the malfunctioning of the economy.

For the price system to be used effectively, it must be made part of another ordering of the economy, which is what the plan is supposed to be. This is true both when the plan is total (i.e., when there is one agency which is responsible for all major decisions in the economy) and when it is partial (i.e., when the decision making is shared among many participants). In either case the plan has to have an overall view of the entire economy and a decision will have to be taken about the role of prices within that total view. The specific role assigned to prices, of course, will depend upon the nature of the plan itself. A total plan in this sense is not one which must dispense with prices and price relationships altogether, but one which gives the policy makers near-complete freedom in using the price relationships to serve the wider aims of planning.

With a partial plan, the policy makers' freedom over the price system is limited and so special care will have to be taken to see that the plan's inevitable interference with the net-work of prices does not turn out to be harmful to the economy as a whole, but is used deliberately to give direction to the economy. Such is the problem of price policy in the Indian context.

**B**ut a coherent price policy of this kind has not been attempted in India even in principle. During the period of the first five-year plan, our approach to price policy, as our approach to planning itself, was dictated largely by the exigencies of the times. The plan was formulated against the background of the post-war inflationary pressures accentuated by the devaluation of the rupee in 1949 and the Korean war boom in the early fifties. Consequently, it was stated in the plan document that the accent of price policy during

the plan period would have to be on the enforcement of price ceilings. The case for price ceilings was reinforced by the theoretical considerations on which the growth strategy of the plan was based.

If there was an effort to step up investment there would initially be an increase in money incomes more rapidly than production, it was stated, and it was necessary to devise measures to contain such potential price inflation. If unchecked, such price inflation would not only cause hardship to the sections of the population who are dependent on fixed incomes, but would also attract excessive resources to the production of relatively unessential consumer goods which might adversely affect the savings propensity of the economy, it was argued. Thus, the price policy of the first plan was essentially one of price controls.

**O**ne would have expected to see a more systematic treatment of price policy in the second plan document which was based on Mahalanobis's carefully worked out plan frame which did take an overall view of the economy. But the second plan document has disappointingly little to say about price policy. For one thing, the price inflation that appeared to be a threat at the time of the drafting of the first plan did not materialise: on the contrary, in spite of the increased investment programme there was a fall in the general price level, an appreciable 17 per cent, with the price of food articles showing a fall of 23 per cent and of industrial raw materials over 24 per cent. Secondly, in the formulation of the second five-year plan, the major consideration was physical or material balances in the economy.

In the plan document, the problem of prices gets only a casual treatment in the context of the relationship between physical and financial planning. The balance to be achieved in the plan has to be both in real and financial terms. Money incomes are

generated in the process of production, and supplies are utilised in response to money demands. It is important, therefore, to operate upon and modify money income flows so as to maintain a balance between the supply of consumer goods and the purchasing power available for being spent on them, between savings and investment and between receipts and payments abroad. In addition, a balance between the demand and supply of each important commodity is necessary. The required balance may, of course, be achieved in part through adjustment in prices and factor payments, through budgetary policies—and, if necessary, through physical controls; but the process as well as the means of adjustment have to be visualised in advance and hence to be provided for in the plan. The essence of financial planning is to ensure that demands and supplies are matched in a manner which exploits physical potentialities as fully as possible without major and unplanned changes in the price structure.

This formulation, though brief, was a slight improvement over the treatment of price policy in the first plan document insofar as the emphasis has changed from the level of prices to the structure of prices, and to the extent that the price structure is closely linked up with the physical balances in the economy.

**I**n the third plan document there is, for the first time, a detailed discussion of the principles of a price policy. The actual working of the second plan had shown that the plan had little control over the level or structure of prices in spite of the various balances the plan document had specified. The general price index moved up by 35 per cent with food prices registering an increase of 38.6 per cent, industrial raw materials of 48.9 per cent and manufactures of 24.3 per cent. The balance between savings and investment was not being maintained either: while investment as a proportion of national income was steadily going up (thanks mainly to foreign aid),

savings as a percentage of national income was sharply declining at first and was picking up only very slowly subsequently. And as for balance of payments, there was an alarming deterioration. The plan's price policy had obviously failed. It was this problem that the third plan document was trying to analyse and rectify.

In the first place, the third plan document expressed itself unambiguously against inflation as a technique of development planning. At the time of the formulation of the second plan, a series of theoretical models had appeared mainly in western countries suggesting inflation as a possible instrument for rapid economic development because of its ability to force savings. Our plans did not overtly accept the strategy of inflation-induced development, but the reference to the deliberate creation of purchasing power in some of the plan documents and the second plan's heavy reliance on deficit financing indicated that we were not altogether hostile to such a possibility.

But, after the experience of the second plan, the third plan document came out quite explicitly against inflationary financing: 'The dangers of continued or excessive price rises are obvious. If the financial outlays in the plan are realised only at higher prices, the real content of the plan gets correspondingly reduced. An inflationary situation is not conducive to the most efficient use of resources. It distorts relative prices and tends to move resources away from uses that have higher priority from a social point of view.' It stated also that 'there is no doubt that it will be necessary during the third plan to keep a close watch on prices, especially the prices of essential commodities, and to be prepared in advance with a strategy for corrective action before difficulties actually become acute.'

Apart from this concern about the level of prices, the third plan document attempted to spell out some of the other aspects of price policy. It linked up price policy

with controls on the one hand to chalk off demand, and increased output, especially of food grains, to augment supply. It related price policy to fiscal policy and monetary policy, the former to mop up the excess purchasing power which tends to push up demands above the level of available supplies and the latter to regulate the pace of credit creation through banks. It brought out the role of buffer stocks and open market operations in food grains to keep price fluctuations within tolerable limits.

In the light of all these tie-ups, the document also saw price policy as one aspect of the overall economic policy, whereby both the scope and limits of price policy were defined. 'The level and structure of prices are related to a number of basic economic decisions, some of which are taken by government, and others rest with the producers, consumers and investors who are widely scattered and act in terms of prospects of economic gain to themselves. A plan tries to bring these related decisions into a common focus, but there are limits to which the course of prices can be altered in the short run. Each major policy decision, such as what scale of investment to undertake, what priority to give to short-term quick-maturing investments, the choice between alternative modes of raising the resources required, raising or lowering of export quotas—all these carry with them certain important decisions as to the course of prices. Given these decisions, it must be recognised that the scope of altering the structure of prices is by no means unlimited.'

his is one of the clearest statements of price policy in our plan documents: it suggests the comprehensive nature of price policy; and it recognises the limitations of price policy where the planning is but partial. In the 1966 draft of the fourth five-year plan, the accent on price policy slid back once again to keeping the price level under control. In the fourth five-year plan: 1969-74 document

again, the key note is price stability, with some passing references to agricultural pricing and the price support programme. In the light of the soaring prices of the sixties, the emphasis on price stability is quite understandable.

Our concern here is not primarily with price policy in the past. But the review of the treatment of the problem of price policy in the plan documents reveals an excessive preoccupation with the level of prices. 'Holding the price line' is obviously the most important aspect of price policy from the point of view of the public. But is that all there is to price policy from the planners' vantage as well? This is the crucial question for the future.

The leading role in the price level in the past—both when it dipped occasionally and when it has been moving up steadily—has been that of agricultural prices. In conformity with the main plank of our price policy, the major effort here also was to keep the price level low and steady. And this is where the policy has been a major failure. Agricultural prices have more than doubled during the past decade after the third plan document declared that there should be no increase in the price of essential commodities. The wholesale price index of food grains moved up from 100 in 1960-61 to 159.2 in 1965-66 and to an all-time high of 214.4 in 1969-70. Why has this happened?

The standard explanations have been that demand for food grains has been going up because of the increase in population, the rise in money incomes and the growth of urbanisation and that supplies have not kept up mainly because of the weather. But we have to probe into this phenomenon a little deeper. Is it possible that the basic strategy of the plans went wrong and excessive money incomes have been created either because of a faulty allocation of investments or because of a deficient mechanism of resource mobilisation? And has the failure in supply been solely because of the weather or has the attempted price

policy itself interfered adversely with the production operations?

There are different possibilities here. In the initial stages of planning at least, there was the widely held belief that the farm producers typically had a backward sloping supply curve, and hence keeping farm prices low was necessary to increase output. Subsequent empirical studies have shown that this belief was only a myth. And hence fiscal considerations may have prevented the administrators, who were committed to a low level of retail prices for food grains, from offering a sufficiently high price for grain procurements. This controversy is still going on and a definite answer to this question is yet to come.

In any case, it is clear that because of the activity of traders and because of the inadequacy of the government's buffer stocks the rising agricultural prices may not have benefited the producers, especially the large number of small producers. Or was it that the high prices of agricultural inputs nullified the high price of agricultural products? One must also look at the relative prices of food grains and cash crops to decide whether the failure of food grains output to increase sufficiently was the result of a switch over into cash crop production, especially where there were no price restrictions on the latter.

Detailed examinations of this kind are necessary to get to know the economic relationships underlying the price structure which the plans try to influence. More than a decade ago, Professor Gadgil in a note to the Planning Commission had suggested that consideration of a group of prices in an interrelated fashion was necessary to have an effective price policy even for agriculture. Stabilization or any effective operation on the prices of food grains, he said, had to be considered in relation to at least three aspects; (a) prices of substitute crops; (b) prices affecting the agricultural producer in his cash outlay in the production effort; and (c) prices affecting the agriculturist as con-

sumer. And, he listed the following articles whose prices had to be studied in an interrelated fashion: cereal food grains, cotton and oil seeds; oil, oil-cake, artificial fertilizers, cement, iron for implements, diesel oil for engines, coal and wood; cloth, sugar, *gur*, vegetable oils, salt, soap and kerosene. To this one may add also the credit structure and the pattern of trade as matters that require to be studied to evolve a policy pertaining to food grain prices.

If price policy with regard to particular commodities is to be effective, therefore, it is necessary to go into interrelationships in some detail. Another aspect of the same problem has to be the examination of intersectoral price relationships, another area neglected in the planners' approach to price policy. What, for instance, is to be the price relationship between agriculture and industry or between consumer goods and producer goods? It may be remarked that in fully or almost fully planned economies, intersectoral relationships are the major concerns of price policy. When the planners have the freedom to determine the level and structure of prices, the intersectoral price relationships assume special significance as they considerably influence both the rate of growth of the economy and the pattern of growth. In the Soviet Union, Poland, Yugoslavia and other totally or semi-totally planned economies the problem of price policy is related to intersectoral price relationships: it is in this sense that prices become an instrument of planning rather than a constraint on it.

In the Indian thinking on price policy, this aspect has not received the attention it deserves. Looking back, once again, on the experience of the past two decades, what we see is that while prices in general have been going up, the prices of agricultural commodities have been moving up much faster than those of industrial commodities. Consequently, the intersectoral terms of trade have been in favour of agriculture except for

the period of the agricultural depression towards the end of the first plan. Whether this has been the result of deliberate policy or not is not quite clear; most probably it was not.

But, as it turned out, our experience in this regard has been the opposite of what obtained in most other parts of the world. It is well known, for instance, that in Japan and in the USSR the pattern was to turn the terms of trade deliberately against agriculture and in favour of industry so as to absorb agricultural surplus to form the basis of industrial expansion.

Hence, our special pattern calls for some scrutiny. In the first place, what exactly does it mean to say that the terms of trade were in favour of agriculture? Where the terms of trade were against agriculture one would surmise that the brunt of it fell on the agricultural producer. But when the terms of trade are in favour of agriculture, it is not necessary that the beneficiaries are the producers; they may well be the traders, or possibly some large producers who are also traders. If this is the case, it will explain why agricultural output did not respond to such favourable prices for agriculture. In fact even if the role of the traders was not harmful to the producers, the wide prevalence of compulsory State procurement of food grains would have made it possible only for producers with large surpluses to benefit by a high open market price of food grains.

These are all speculations about what happened in the past. The questions for the future are of a different order. How long will the terms of trade continue to be in favour of agriculture? Thanks to the high yielding varieties of seeds and because of the impact of the new strategy in agriculture, agricultural output especially of food grains is rapidly increasing. So far this did not result in a reduction in agricultural prices because there has been a steady scaling down of food grains imports as well. During the coming two or three years, a significant

increase in the net market availability of food grains is a distinct possibility, and hence the upward movement of food grain prices may be arrested or substantially reduced. In industry, on the other hand, prices tend to have the notorious ratchet-effect—prices refusing to be flexible downwards.

**T**hus, a reversal of the intersectoral terms of trade between agriculture and industry appears within sight. Some of the consequences of this change can be easily predicted. For instance, the zonal system is likely to disappear resulting in a freer movement of food grains within the country. But what will be the impact of the change on agricultural and industrial production, and on capital formation in the two sectors? And if our agricultural strategy so far has been based on price incentives, what is likely to be its effect on agricultural operations in general? These will be some of the questions for a price policy in the immediate future.

We have to become alive to the long term aspects of a price policy as well. To be an effective instrument of planning, the price policy in the long run will also have to be related to an income policy which influences, and regulates to the extent necessary, the creation, distribution and utilization of incomes. A price policy usually has an impact on incomes. Thus, an increase in the level of prices, as in the case of the classical inflationary forced savings, is in fact an attempt to influence the distribution of income; changes in the structure of prices influence the distribution of income when the prices concerned are those of producer goods and the utilization of income when the prices concerned refer to consumer goods. When the price policy includes or is supplemented by fiscal and monetary policies (i.e., price policy in its macro aspect) its impact on incomes will be even greater.

However, a price policy divorced from an income policy can be self-defeating. In the past we have

been trying to influence the allocation of resources in the economy through a price policy supported by fiscal and monetary measures and physical controls to some extent. And, yet, because of the absence of an income policy, scarce resources in the form of skilled manpower, foreign exchange, and physical goods such as steel have been attracted away into the production of luxury goods contrary to the plans and much against their spirit. In order to keep the prices of mass consumption goods low, the planners may design a particular price policy, but it can be completely thwarted and the production of consumer goods reduced in fact if powerful economic forces operating through the price mechanism divert resources into non-priority areas of production. It may appear that this possibility exists only when the output in the economy is low and when scarcity conditions prevail, so that as the economy develops in the long run the problem will be almost automatically removed.

**B**ut, at higher levels of performance of the economy, the diversion of resources may not be from basic consumption goods, but from socially necessary goods into production of goods for private affluence. The question really is whether even in the long run there will be a social direction of demand in the economy which is one of the implications of an income policy. The issue, however, is not that simple. An effective income policy calls for certain prior decisions of a very basic nature such as the role of the market mechanism in the economy, and more important, the pattern of ownership of resources, on which ultimately the nature of an income policy will depend. We have, in the past, evaded these long term questions by making convenient short term compromises. But the days of decision by default are over; we must decide soon whether we are opting for an economic order which uses the price mechanism or one which will be used by it.

# Industrial licensing

ASHOK V. DESAI

INDUSTRIAL licensing has probably evoked the strongest abuse among the central government's policy instruments; certainly, it seems to have few friends in public. And, yet, it has proved one of the hardiest plants in the government's Moghul garden; it looks as if it has a strong body of beneficiaries, who would lay down their lives—in private—for it.

If industrial licensing is divested of the dirt it has gathered in its twenty years of gambolling, it has an appeal which would go straight to a conventional Indian heart—it is a policy instrument ideally designed to promote 'essential' industries and curb 'inessential' ones. A devout planner might find it too loose for his taste, since it applies only to new ventures, and does not make established industry flow 'through proper channels'.

But, really, it is not so improper as he might think, for fresh licences are required for substantial expansion as well as for the manufacture of new articles; and in a technologically progressive world, to which India can hardly help belonging, much to the chagrin of some of our industrialists, a firm cannot survive for any length of time without expanding or making new products, i.e., without licences.

If licensing is so unpopular nevertheless, it is because our ideas about what is 'essential' and what is not are rather fluid. For an industrialist, all industries except his own are inessential. But even for less committed Indians, there is a plethora of distinctions. Who would dare disagree with any of the following propositions, for instance?

1. Import-saving industries are more essential than the rest.
2. Exporting industries are more essential than the rest.

3. Industries producing equipment or building materials are more essential than those producing consumer goods.

4. Industries producing necessities are more essential than those producing luxuries.

All the above propositions have a more or less economic content, and are directly relevant to a discussion of licensing policy. But licensing can be, and has been, used to serve a number of other social and political objectives; for instance, (a) to promote Indian firms at the expense of foreign ones,

(b) to protect labour-intensive firms against the competition of more capitalized ones,

(c) to shield small firms from the competition of large ones,

(d) to minimize surplus capacity, and

(e) to aid planning.

These propositions and objectives look so reasonable, so obviously right, that any one who contests them must be a rightist lunatic. How simple, how satisfying it is to lay down policy!

Let us, however, come down from the high perch of policy-makers and place ourselves in the seat of a (so to speak) humble minister. An idea of the cruel dilemmas faced by him is best given by quoting from the memories of Babu Gaianda Singh Gaya Ram, the distinguished Industries Minister in the New Socialist National Congress (X) Government.

'On my first day in office, I entered my room, made a respectable obeisance to the venerable portrait of the Great Leader, and sat down. There were three files

on my table concerning the following matters.

'SOD/26384/JINX-4H/72. A Bombay scrap trader wants to produce imitation Persian rugs in Kashmir, and promises to export them "on a colossal scale since there is an unlimited world market." Noting by Section Officer—"The Minister may most kindly and wisely note that the applicant is believed to be of a loose moral character, and intends to produce an inessential luxury item".

'HEL/83E8-5SHL/H/84. A small manufacturer proposes to go into a 50:50 joint venture with a Yugoslav firm and produce obsolete switchgear; the "foreign collaborator" promises to take 20 per cent of the output for ten years.

'SUX/JELL03-WM/62-0W9). In an application sponsored by the Metallurgical, Mineralogical, Metaphysical and Agricultural Design Organo-Corporation through the Central Scientific Development Council a Big Business House proposes to manufacture the Bharat alias Hindustan tractor designed by MMADO, whose repair requirements are expected to generate considerable rural employment and spread mechanical skills in the countryside.

'Obviously complicated issues were involved. I called my Secretary, who was a proper bureaucrat. He suggested I should reject all the three applications, since they went against the governments' declared policy. I told him that he was utterly uncommitted to the government's ideal of development with social justice, and promptly transferred him to NEFA. I am glad to say that thanks to strenuous efforts by me and other distinguished ministers, led by our Prime Minister, this breed of bureaucrats has been completely weeded out now.

'Then I called an economist. He told me that the cases should be decided by reference to a social welfare function. He took out a blackboard from his pocket, and wrote

$W=f(a, b, c, d, \dots, z)$ .  
where, he said, a stood for em-

ployment, b for big business, and so on.

I asked him what answers the equation gave. He said that the social welfare function had first to be defined by asking the people of the country. I pointed out that going about asking the 200 million voters and deriving a welfare function from their preferences would be a rather cumbersome procedure. Then he said that since I was their elected representative, my preference function could be taken as a surrogate social welfare function. I asked him if I could then take any decision I liked. He said there were some consistency and transitivity conditions to be satisfied.

'By this time I was beginning to understand his game. So I asked him what there was to prevent me using a different preference function for each case. He could not think of anything. Thereupon, I was very pleased, and immediately sent him off to a UN job in Burundi.

I then called the Additional Secretary, and told him to use his discretion and dispose of the cases as follows.

'SOD/26384/JINX-4H/72. Approved, since much employment will be generated in Kashmir, which is a backward-cross out backward-developing State.

'HEL/83E8-5SHY/H/84. Approved on the condition that the applicant exports his entire output.

'SUX/JELL03-WM/62-0W9). Approved, to encourage the bright young scientists of MMADO. They should all be given scrolls in Sanskrit at the next investiture.'

One is bound to be impressed at the deep sagacity that Babu Gaianda Singh Gaya Ram brought to his work—until one realizes how difficult it would be not to be wise in his job. All one has to do is to take a decision—any decision—on each case, and decide which of the four propositions and five objectives would justify it. That part is as easy as the game infants play of matching blocks

with slots. The only part that requires some skill is the decision itself; and even the decision is not difficult for a clear-headed, professional politician who aims to maximize the welfare of his party through himself.

The shortcomings of the industrial licensing system are two-fold. First, it is an instrument that can be put to many other uses besides the specific aims of the government, and is bound to be used, to a greater or less extent, for purposes which are inimical to public policy. In particular, it can be used by inefficient firms to suppress competition, and by politicians and bureaucrats to extract unauthorized benefits from industry. Second, industrial licensing is intended to serve a multiplicity of objectives, whose balancing must be a feat of pure judgment which cannot be subjected to any uniform, objective criteria. In other words, the multiplicity of objectives inevitably introduces arbitrariness in decision-making.

What is the solution? It is to look at all the objectives and instruments of economic policy together, and to design instruments which would as far as possible serve one, and only one, of the objectives at a time. For instance, import substitution and export promotion require generalized tariffs and export subsidies. Investment goods industries can be given priority industry treatment in income taxation. Consumption of luxuries can be discouraged by excise duties and licence fees. Foreign business in India can be discouraged by special taxes on dividend and royalty remittances. Labour-intensive firms can be encouraged and surplus capacity penalized by a tax on the gross block of businesses. Small firms can be protected by introducing greater progression in corporate taxation. Planning should concentrate on problem areas in the economy; it will then be found that while much anticipation and pushing is required in those areas, industrial licensing powers are quite superfluous. And so they are, planning or no planning.



# Project planning

V. V. BHATT

THE basic weaknesses of the Indian planning effort are mainly the following:

- (a) Lack of an internally consistent set of plan objectives;
- (b) Lack of adequate meaningful project planning; and
- (c) Lack of adequate machinery to evolve a set of internally consistent economic policies required for the attainment of plan objectives.

These basic weaknesses adversely affect the work relating to aggregative as well as multi-sector planning with the result that the five-year plan documents reveal plan targets that are not internally consistent and, of course, can hardly be optimum.

Take, for example, the two principal objectives of growth and social justice. It is not clear in concrete terms what they signify nor is it clear how any conflict between the two is to be resolved. It is no use pretending that there is no conflict between the two; there doubtless would be such conflict and it is necessary to know what precise significance is attached to each to solve problems of choice—the essence of any plan effort. Without such indices of significance relating to plan objectives, it is, of course, very difficult to evolve a set of consistent economic policies. This problem is aggravated because of the lack of machinery for evolving sound policies.

But, the major defect relates to project work. Without this basic

work, the data used for multi-sector plan models remain obsolete and out-of date with the result that however skilfully the available data are used, the multi-sector plan models would not provide the right indicators for a variety of purposes. A feedback from project work to planning work is essential in order to evolve a meaningful multi-sector plan. The planning models as built now remain like super-structures built on sandy foundations.

Project work has several aspects. Firstly, the project ideas have to be identified and to do this in the light of lack of full information and uncertainties requires an entrepreneurial skill of a high order. The next step is to prepare preliminary feasibility studies which would make it possible to take an initial tentative decision about the worthiness of each identified project idea. Detailed project reports, then, can be prepared for projects which *prima facie* seem worthwhile.

These two steps—preparation of preliminary feasibility studies and detailed project reports—are crucial from many points of view. If this work is rightly organised and developed, it would enable a country to develop the art and skill of designing projects—a skill that is a basic prerequisite for sustained development. However, in India, so far not much attention has been paid to these aspects and most of the important projects were designed with the help of

foreign collaboration in one form or another. It is only now that it is realised that this basic skill needs to be developed here.

**T**his project work is significant from another point of view also. If it is done intelligently, it should throw up technological research problems, the solution of which could promote accelerated development. These problems can be identified and provided to technological research laboratories for a possible solution. Thus, a vital link can be forged between technological research and actual project work. One of the reasons for the lack of meaningful technological research in India is the inadequacy of project work and a complete ignorance of its significance for scientific and technological research.

The subsequent step in project work relates to project appraisal. This has several aspects. Firstly, the technical basis of the project needs to be examined thoroughly and it has to be seen whether technical choices, including the choice of location, are made correctly. Secondly, the demand for a product-mix in India as well as abroad needs to be studied and the appropriate marketing arrangements worked out. Thirdly, there has to be an appraisal of the adequacy of its management and organisational set-up for project implementation. Fourthly, the financial viability of the project along with the financial arrangements need to be studied.

If a project is found viable from all these points of view, its economic appraisal from the country's point of view has to be attempted. In this connection, it is necessary to be clear about the indices of the significance of a project from the national point of view. Two basic indices which are operational and meaningful relate to (a) the internal rate of return of a project and (b) the implicit exchange rate of the project. These criteria will reveal the national significance of a project.

Then comes the final step of project selection. All projects for

the purpose need to be ranked in terms of the two indices indicated and such projects should be selected as give the highest internal rate of return and the lowest exchange rate (in terms of rupees for, say, one U.S. dollar). This selection process should be such as to exhaust the total available investible resources during a given time period. Thus, those projects are left which would have a lower internal rate of return and a higher exchange rate than the marginal project which is selected.

**I**n this connection, a problem that is much discussed relates to shadow prices. Because of domestic distortions, it is argued, the actual prices do not represent the social cost of various products and services. Further, it is necessary to know the future course of the social cost of products and services for investment decisions.

But, the main question is whether domestic distortions are temporary or permanent. If they can be removed, then the best course would be to eliminate them. If they cannot be removed, they represent an aspect of reality which no plan can ignore. Further, the derivation of shadow prices through an optimising linear planning model, can hardly be a technically sound procedure in the light of inadequate basic data (because of poor project work and lack of attention to the primary but pedestrian task of data collection and processing) and uncertainties of various types. The use of shadow prices in some sectors and of other prices in the other sectors would, moreover, create further distortions. Finally, subsidies and taxes which the use of shadow prices involves is hardly feasible from an administrative view point and, further, it is still to be examined whether such subsidies would not weaken the motivational aspects of entrepreneurship and management—aspects which are vital for sustained development.

It would be much easier and of more operational significance to

derive an internal rate of return that is consistent with the plan objectives. On the side of the exchange rate, it is possible to fix the level of the implicit exchange rate of a project; any project with a higher rate can be rejected. Over the prevailing exchange rate, a margin of around 30 per cent can be allowed to take care of (a) learning phase for a new project, (b) export incentives and policies of the developed countries—the fact that their export prices are in many cases lower than their domestic prices and (c) the fact that the actual exchange rate may not represent the 'true' exchange rate for the economy as a whole. On this basis one can suggest two criteria for project selection in non-infra-structure fields: (a) the internal rate of return should be at least 15 per cent per annum and (b) the implicit exchange rate of the project should be equal to or lower than Rs 9.75 for the U.S. dollar.

**I**t is difficult to make a choice among various projects at a point of time. This arises for the simple reason that, at any point of time, we are faced, by and large, with only one well-worked out project; we do not have a large number of projects on the shelf, so to say, from among which one could choose the best on the basis of the ranking of projects in the light of the indices of significance indicated earlier. Thus, the suggested criteria have operational significance.

At present, the picture in the field of economic appraisal is chaotic. The Planning Commission has not evolved either indices of significance or operational criteria for the selection of projects. The choice of projects for implementation, therefore, can hardly be rational. It is no wonder that many of the projects selected should fare so badly at the implementation and subsequent stages.

After a project is selected comes the stage of project supervision. For this purpose, a form

for collection and processing of data needs to be devised which would enable the various institutions to (a) carry out detailed project supervision, (b) find out reasons for the divergence of the anticipated outcome from the actual one, (c) fix norms of efficiency in a given industrial group, (d) study inter-industrial linkages and (e) make projections of investment, output, exports and national income on the basis of the projects under implementation. Such studies relating to the project supervision stage would also facilitate policy making by providing useful information for the purpose. Efficient project supervision work would also enable the institution to identify project ideas that need to be implemented and the whole project cycle could begin all over again.

Project work in some significant cases needs to be done for all the related projects—a project complex. For example, for the various employment schemes, it is essential to study the whole project complex for the purpose if it is to be vitally and integrally related to the over-all plan objectives and effort. If for example, agricultural output schemes are related to irrigation projects, fertiliser and insecticide projects, road building plans, marketing centres and activity, projects in the fields of horticulture, vegetable farming, dairy, poultry fisheries, and other projects related to inputs of all these sectors or their outputs, it would be possible to derive meaningful, effective operational schemes and policies for the purpose of improving the standard of living of the rural population in general via employment and income creation.

**T**he Industrial Development Bank of India—apex development bank wholly owned by the Reserve Bank of India—has initiated various steps concerning project work and its phases described earlier for the promotion of industrialisation of backward districts and backward States. Starting from the initial step of identification of project ideas through sur-

veys of industrial possibilities, it is taking steps for (a) the preparation of preliminary feasibility studies, (b) search of potential entrepreneurs, (c) preparation of detailed project reports, (d) project appraisal and (e) project supervision with the assistance of private Technical Consultancy Services (whom it is trying to encourage, particularly if they are manned by bright young professionals, in the national interest), State-level institutions, Lead Banks and the other term-lending institutions.

It is also trying to forge a link between project work and technological research. It would be its effort to promote coordination of State-level financial institutions and the State Governments' industrial departments for promoting industrialisation through an informal inter-institutional meeting comprising these bodies.

**F**urther, it is impressing on them the need for establishing at a State level a Technical Consultancy Services Centre for project work—to be jointly financed by these bodies. It is trying to impress on them the need for a District Centre—a big Department Store—to serve as a nucleus for the provision of credit, marketing, purchase, extension and education and even recreation services to the farmers, traders, technicians, workshops and industrialists—actual and potential—a sort of a modern temple which can radiate development impulses in the surrounding parts.

All these activities are of recent origin and much would depend on the creative imagination and innovative drive with which the present and proposed measures are implemented.

On the analogy of the Industrial Development Bank of India, it is possible and, indeed, essential to set up a National Development Bank with branches in each State to do the project work in all its aspects as well as to perform the financing function. The Industrial Development Bank does provide finance to the public sec-

tor enterprises; but judging from its resources, its role can only be of marginal significance. If borrowing right from the domestic as well as the foreign market is vested in the suggested National Development Bank, it will come in possession of a major part of the capital account resources of the Central and State Governments.

**W**ith these resources and with creative and forward looking management, essential for a development bank, it can make a significant contribution towards attaining the objectives of efficient sustained development of the economy. To a very great extent, economic development is a function of such institutional change as is essential to respond to the challenge of development; the type of optimisation techniques discussed in economic literature has, indeed, only a secondary and relatively minor role in generating and promoting development impulses.

Thus, there is an urgent need for a national development bank with the function of providing term finance to public sector enterprises on business principles and in the light of plan priorities and investment pattern. Such a bank can be put in charge of all the capital resources of the Central and State Governments; this can be done by investing it with the authority to borrow in the domestic as well as the external markets. It would, then, nationally allocate these resources to various sectors and governments in the light of the plan. However, the actual disbursement of funds should depend on the soundness of projects. The Bank would grant both 'hard' as well as 'soft' loans depending on the sector to which a specific project belongs. The advantages of such a course would be several. Plan priorities would be adhered to; projects would be rationally selected; there would be a continuous watch and supervision at the project implementation stage; the overall efficiency of government enterprises would improve.

# Books

**JOBS FOR OUR MILLIONS** by V. V. Giri, Vyasa Publications, Madras 1970, pp 116.

The Introduction and first eight chapters of this book analyse the background to the problem and attempt to discuss the evolution of ideas on the subject from the 1938 National Planning Committee (of which the author was the Convener) to the discussion in Parliament in the late 'sixties. Chapters 9 to 30 deal with the employment policies suggested by the author to provide 'jobs for our millions'.

The early chapters are certainly the weakest. Chapter 1 states that under the Directive Principles of our Constitution everyone has the right to work and protection against unemployment. The rest of the chapter is made up of a number of enigmatic references to historical developments, at times with an autobiographical touch (see pages 12 and 13 in particular).

Chapter 2 provides a very sketchy account of the discussions in the plan document relating to the employment problem. No serious attempt is made to judge the efficacy of employment planning in the past. The author believes that the result of the plans has been an increase in the backlog of the unemployed, and is apparently unaware of the doubts expressed by the Planning Commission regarding the concept of backlog and the possibility of measuring the increases in employment due to a

plan (see *Fourth Five-Year Plan, 1969-74, Draft*, para 21.12, published in 1969).

Perhaps this is the result of the great faith that the author has in the capacity of manpower planners. According to him: 'Manpower budgeting should reach a state of near perfection to enable the planners to quantify the impact on actual employment in rural and urban areas of Plan efforts. This can be done by having a clear perspective of available manpower on the basis of population growth and the manpower absorbed consequent on the development activity included in the Plan.' (p. 17-18)

In many other ways as well the author shows a lack of understanding of the Indian labour market. In Chapters 4 and 5 an attempt is made to assess the magnitude of unemployment and underemployment by merely quoting conflicting estimates from a variety of sources (often unstated). 'Estimates of unemployment,' according to Giri, 'vary from 10 to 50 million, and of underemployment from 100 to 170 million.' He also cites National Sample Survey data for 1960-61 to suggest that in rural areas 8.23 per cent of the employed persons work for 42 hours or less and are available for additional work. For urban areas the corresponding proportion is 5.6 per cent. Even if we assume a working population of 200 million in 1960-61 and an underemployment rate of 10 per cent, the number comes to no more than 20 million—way below the lower bound of 100 million indicated by the author.

In general, the author does not seem to have gone into the question of the level of unemployment and

underemployment in any depth. To provide jobs for our millions we should know how many these millions are; do they need jobs or do they need the means to raise the productivity in their existing occupations; are they willing to work outside their households or are they not; and are they willing to work throughout the year or do they prefer to move into and out of the labour force during the year? To plan for the future it is necessary to know whether economic growth, social change, urbanisation and education would raise or lower the proportion of the population entering the labour market.

The concrete proposals discussed in Chapters 9 to 30 are summarized in Chapter 29. According to V. V. Giri: 'To put it in a nutshell, the absorption of additional rural labour in gainful employment would be made possible with the development of co-operative farming and land settlement programmes, scientific intensive farming, including those under high-yielding varieties and multi-crop patterns, a labour intensive rural works programme, large-scale rural housing, massive development of small and village industries in rural areas, and diffusion of industry from urban concentrations to small towns and rural areas.' (page 107)

Giri favours schemes which will provide a great deal of employment in the near future. It is not very clear whether much of the employment so created will be of a permanent kind and whether it will be conducive to the rapid growth of output in the long run. He appears unduly optimistic of the prospects of raising resources for his schemes and does not attempt to judge the likely impact of his plan on aggregate demand and prices or essential commodities in the economy.

Perhaps the most novel suggestion of the author is a programme of land colonisation. This would involve the reclamation of cultivable waste, the extension of irrigation, and intensive cultivation of the land so reclaimed. Each unit set up would have about 1200 acres and 100 unemployed persons and their families would be settled there. Ownership rights would vest with the State and evidently the State would have to meet all the initial losses. In some places the author suggests that these colonies are for the educated unemployed and in this Gandhian 'Garden of Eden' there are to be mechanical and electrical engineers or draughtsmen to repair tractors, bulldozers, drilling sets, pump sets etc. In an employment oriented programme one would have thought that tractors were the serpents in the Garden of Eden!

Schedule I on page 114 which is supposed to give a concrete picture of the scheme is most confusing. While the author envisages a land colony with a village unit of about 1200 acres for 100 unemployed persons and their families, the Schedule claims to relate to 1000 educated unemployed persons and provides for 120 agricultural plots and 120 homesteads. All the requirements are given in acres; no

estimates of the cost of the scheme is provided, or of the element of State subsidy involved.

The book under review is an earnest attempt to solve the problem of Indian poverty. But to imagine that it is largely an employment problem and that short run solutions are not at the cost of the long run, and to fail to realize that employment policy is closely linked to income distribution is to fail to come to grips with the problem. What V. V. Giri is really attempting is an alternative strategy for Indian development. But to convince us he must go through the task of providing a time profile of at least the key variables of the economy. This he fails to do.

J. Krishnamurthy

### **SEMINAR ON FOODGRAIN BUFFER STOCKS IN INDIA** by the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics, Bombay, 1969.

The volume under review is a collection of nine papers presented at a seminar held in November 1969.

In these papers, buffer stocks are equated with stocks held by, or on behalf of, the government, and operated with the chief objectives of evening out of supplies *as between years*, and the 'stabilization of prices'. A possible conflict of interests is given as the chief argument for removing stocks from private trade. Curiously enough, Jai Krishna and S. C. Jha, extend this argument to exclude even the stocks held by the State Governments (p. 40). They equate buffer stocks with those held by or on behalf of the Central Government. A further extension would presumably be to consider only buffer stocks controlled by a truly 'National' Central Minister!

At the general level of a 'possible conflict of interests' the argument for not considering the stocks with private trade may have some validity. However, assertions such as, 'past performance of private trade channel in the foodgrains leaves little doubt that in their case private trade will dominate any considerations of maintaining a reasonable price level' (I. C. Puri and R. Srinivasan, p. 123) and 'It is common knowledge that private traders acquire stocks for making vast profits. Very few traders indulge in handling stocks only for getting a reasonable return on their resources (Jai Krishna and Jha, p. 39) is difficult to swallow. Thus, it is not clear how private trade can contain price rises in a situation of overall excess demand and/or severe shortfalls in agricultural production due to drought—except perhaps by not adding to demand by making speculative purchases for stock building. This, in turn, raises the question of the empirical significance of such speculative demand in influencing price movements.

As for the profit margins in the food trade, careful studies by Uma Lele and Ralph Cummings, of sorghum and wheat markets respectively, show that the bulk of the difference between the purchase and

# The problem

China, big, strong, stolid, and apparently unified, suddenly went through a convulsive movement. The organizational discipline and homogeneity which was acknowledged as the chief source of strength of Peking seemed to go to pieces. Known and powerful leaders were dragged out and toppled. New groups and combinations arose in the political power structure and considerable inner struggle ensued. The army inherited the mantle of the Communist Party and was turned into a political organization.

And then calm and stability again. The country has gone back with its wonted energy into the business of economic construction and the restoration of organizational unification. The Communist Party structure is being gradually revived and rebuilt. What really happened? What were the issues involved and what kind of a China has emerged after the recent shake-up? Have fundamental changes taken

place and is it a China easier to deal with or more difficult to handle?

A whole series of question from: Despite the restoration of the law and order situation, why has the new NPC not convened so far, and the State allowed to go without a formal Head of State or a proper Cabinet? Despite the fact that the party is supposed to lead the army, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the CCP was celebrated on a very low key with no meetings, and no appearance or statement by Chairman Mao himself, while the Army Day, falling one month later on August 1, was celebrated with meetings and banquets and with all-round praise of the 'consistently correct' leadership of the army? Why is it that even three years after the Cultural Revolution, party formation is still not complete? On the 50th Anniversary of the Party, which fell on 1st July, 1971, one would have expected the process of party reconstruction to be completed, and yet four provinces are still without party

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## CHINA TODAY

a symposium on  
the cultural revolution  
and after

symposium participants

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on the relevant questions

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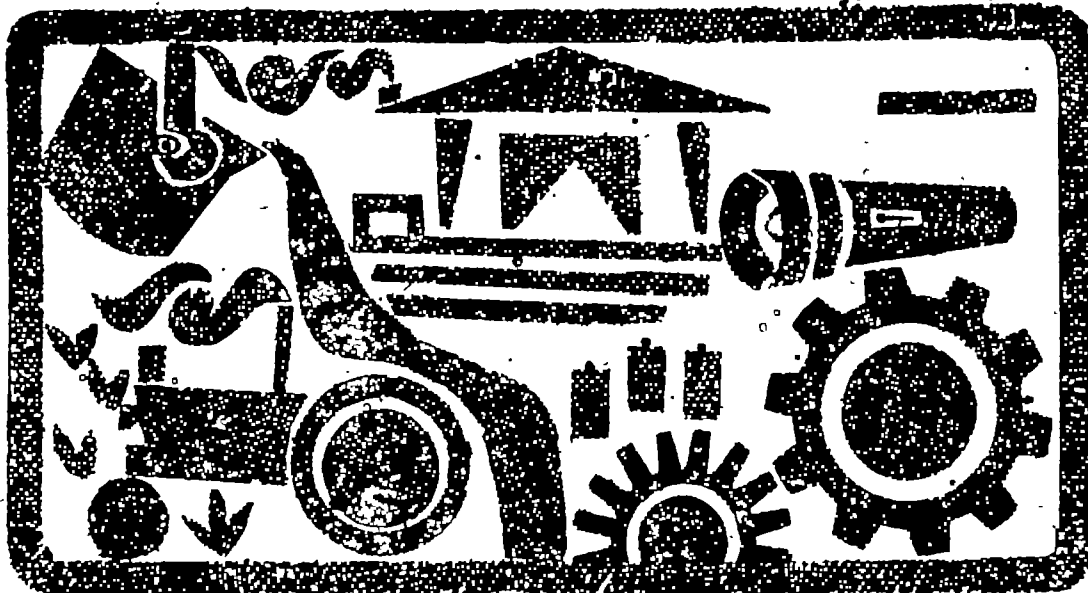
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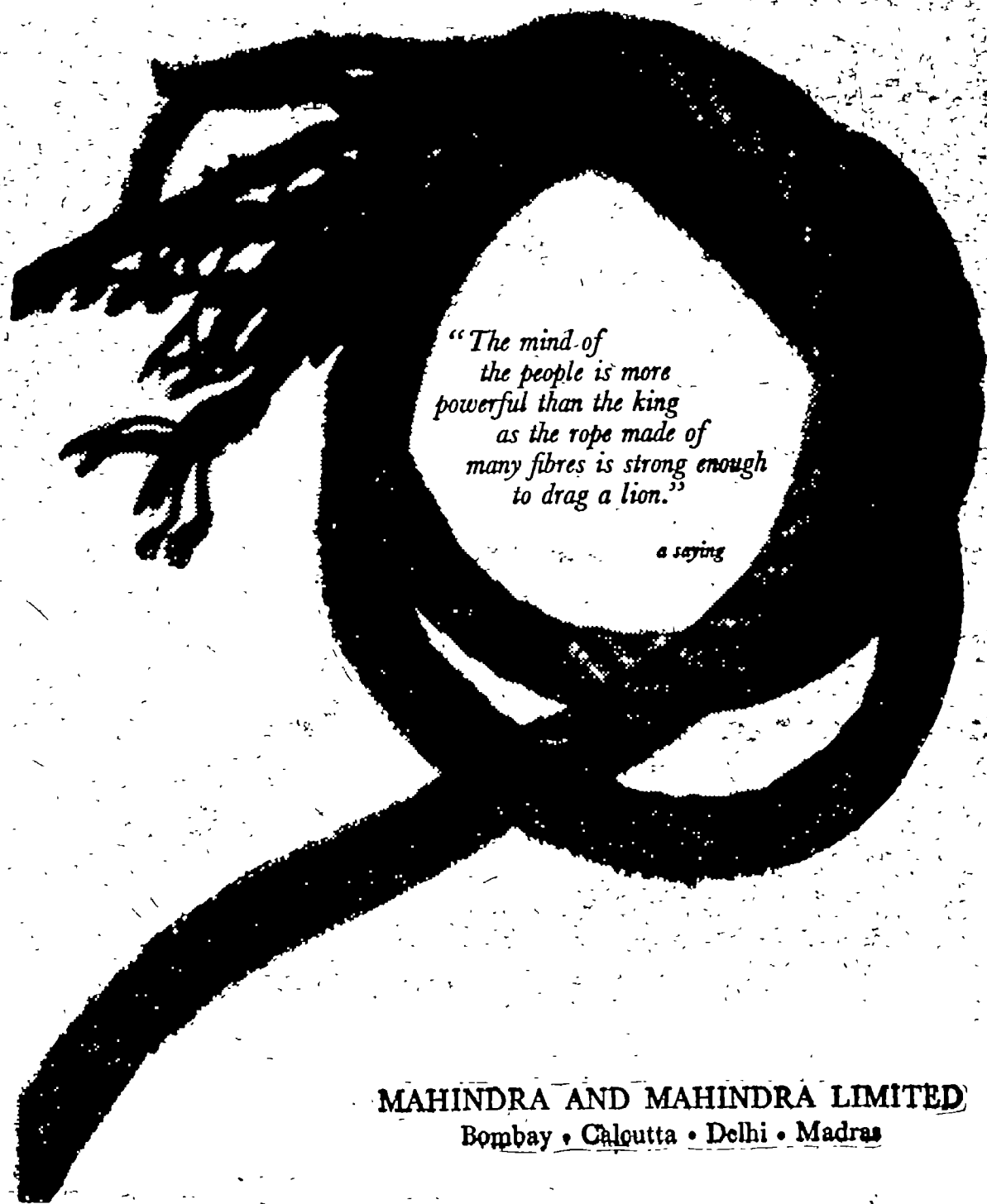
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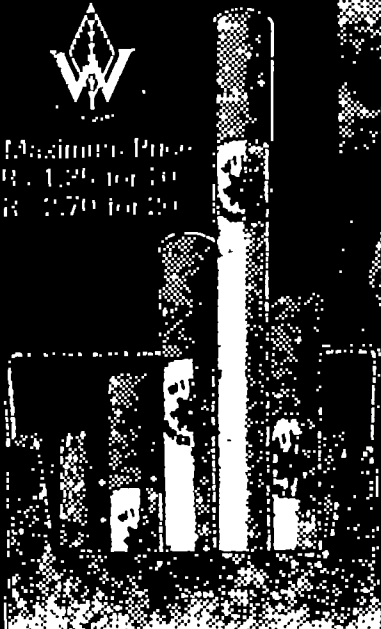
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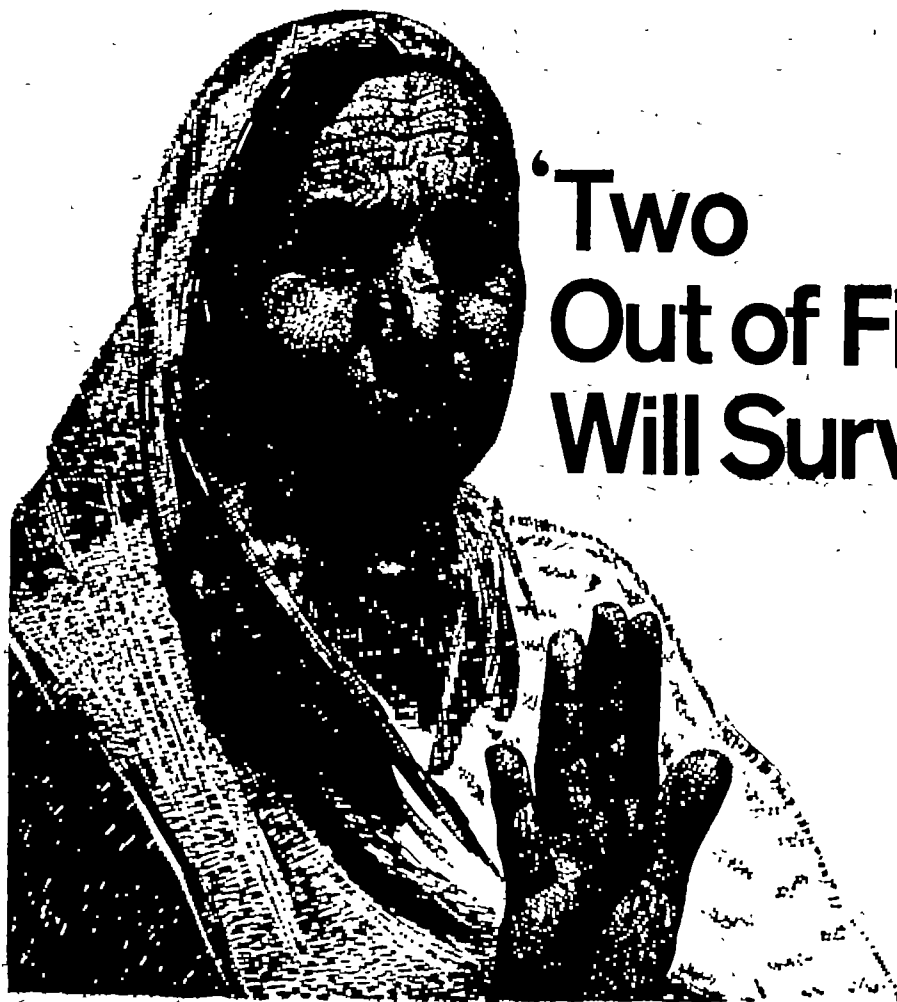
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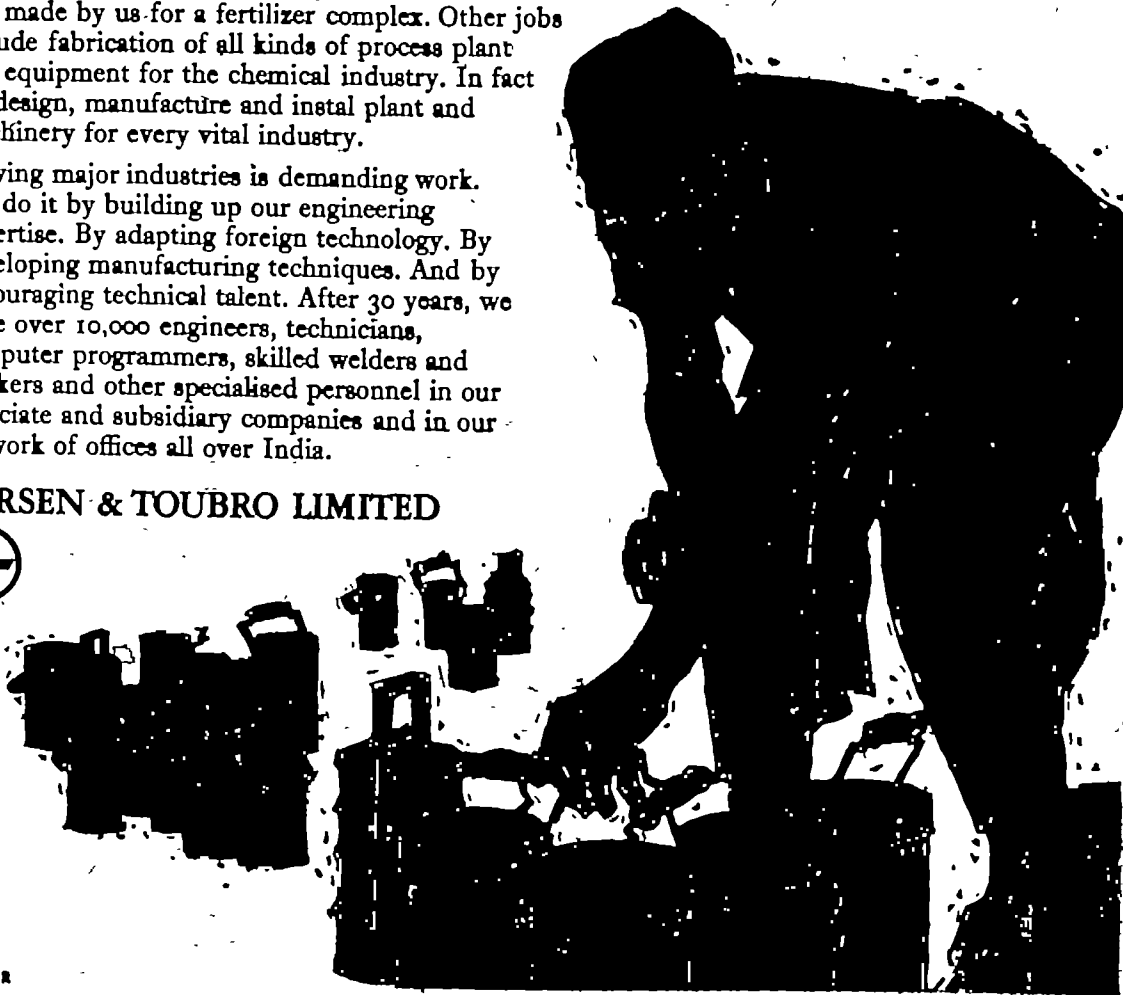
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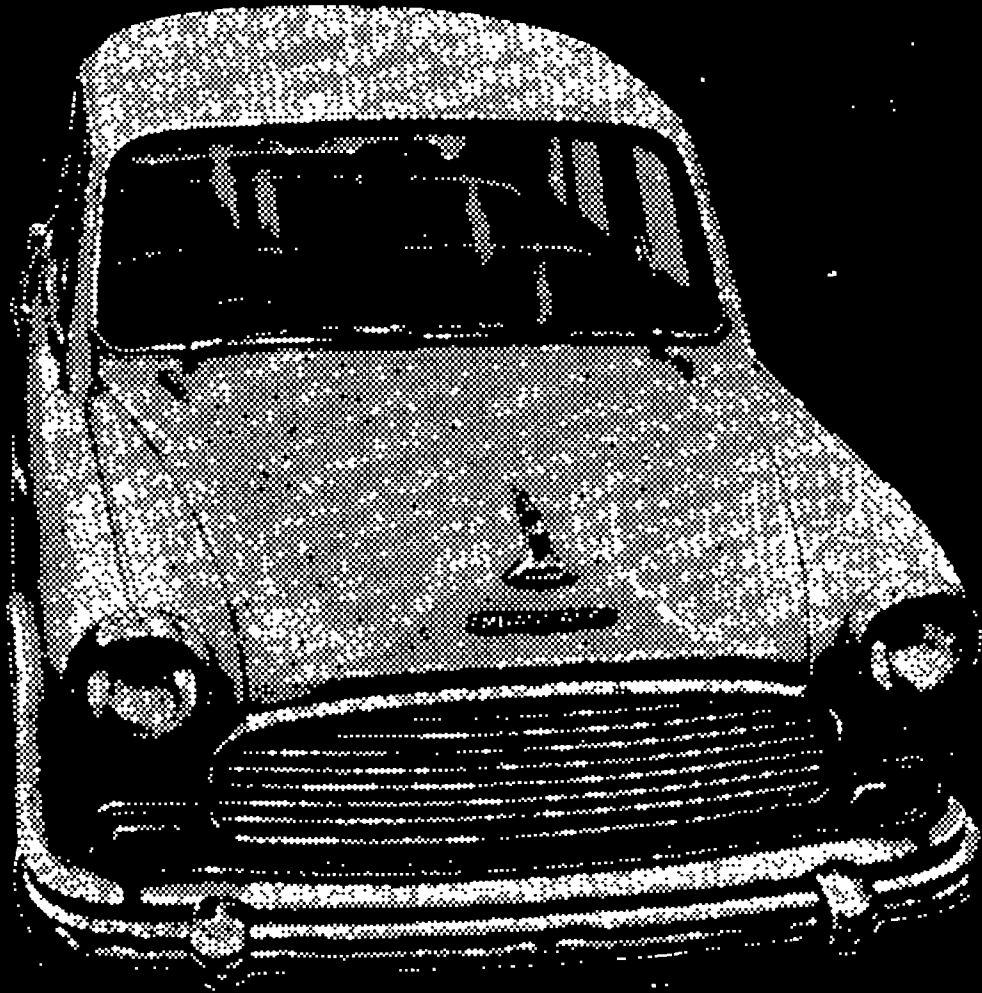
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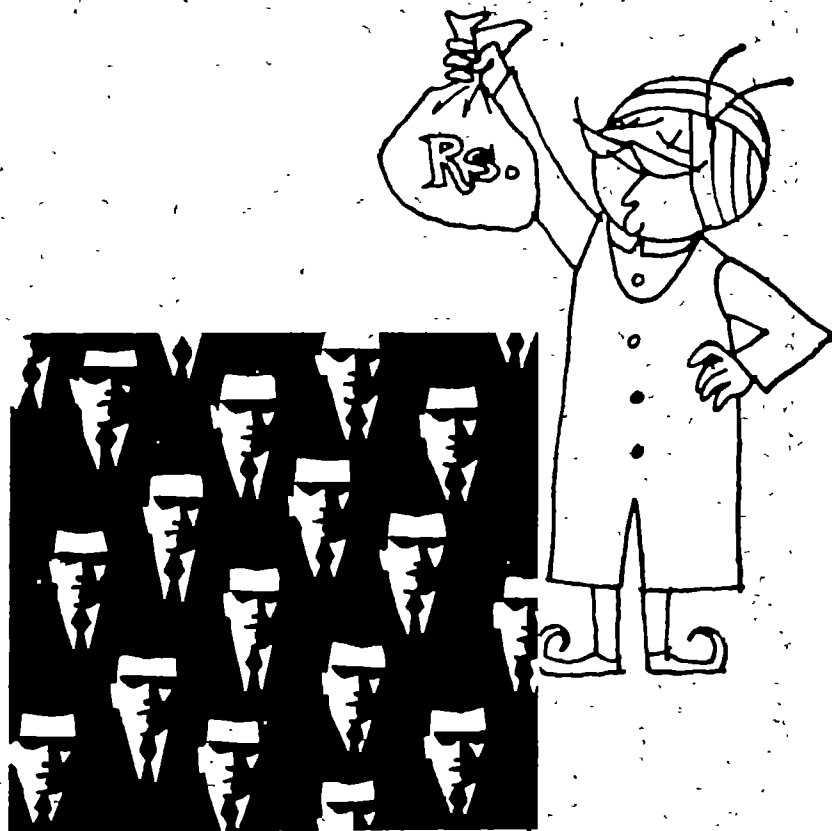


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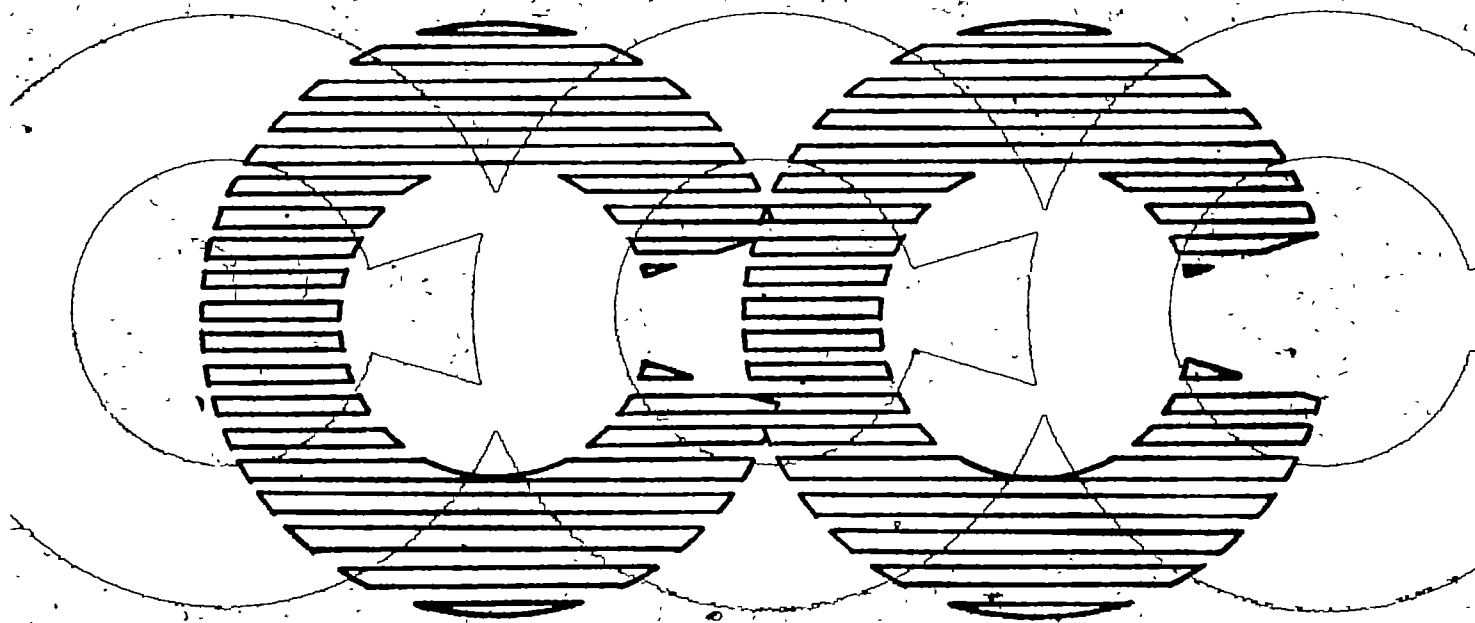
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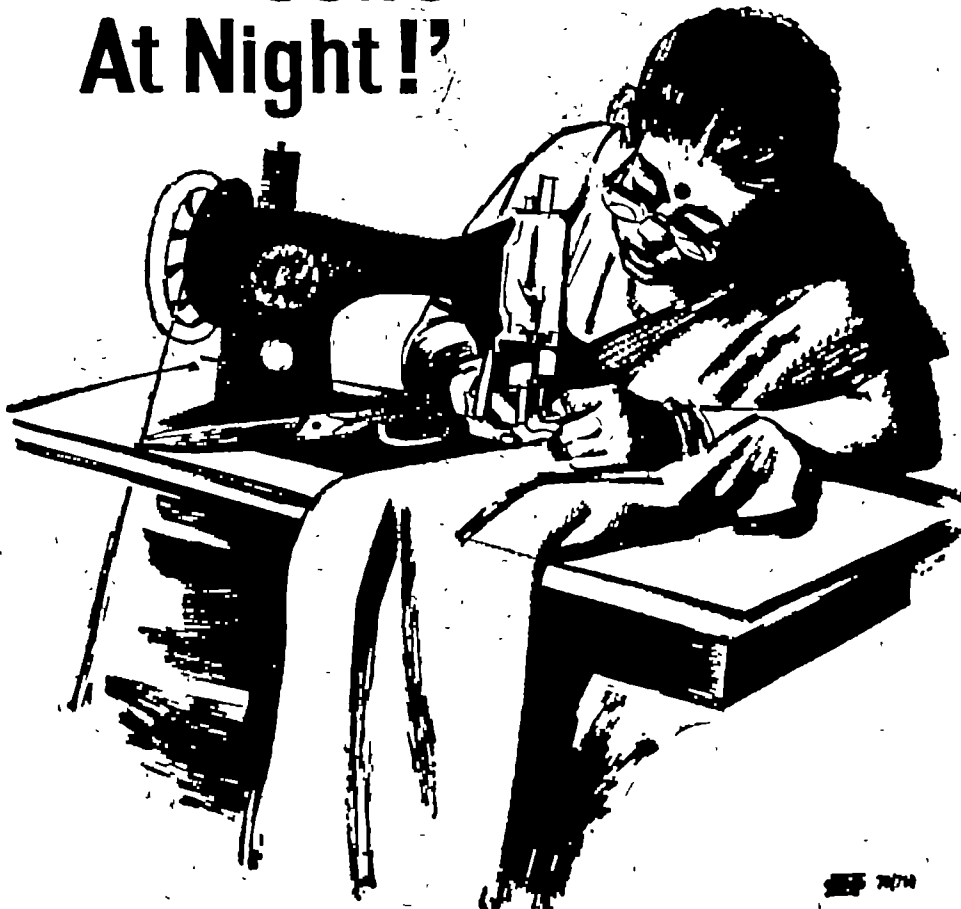
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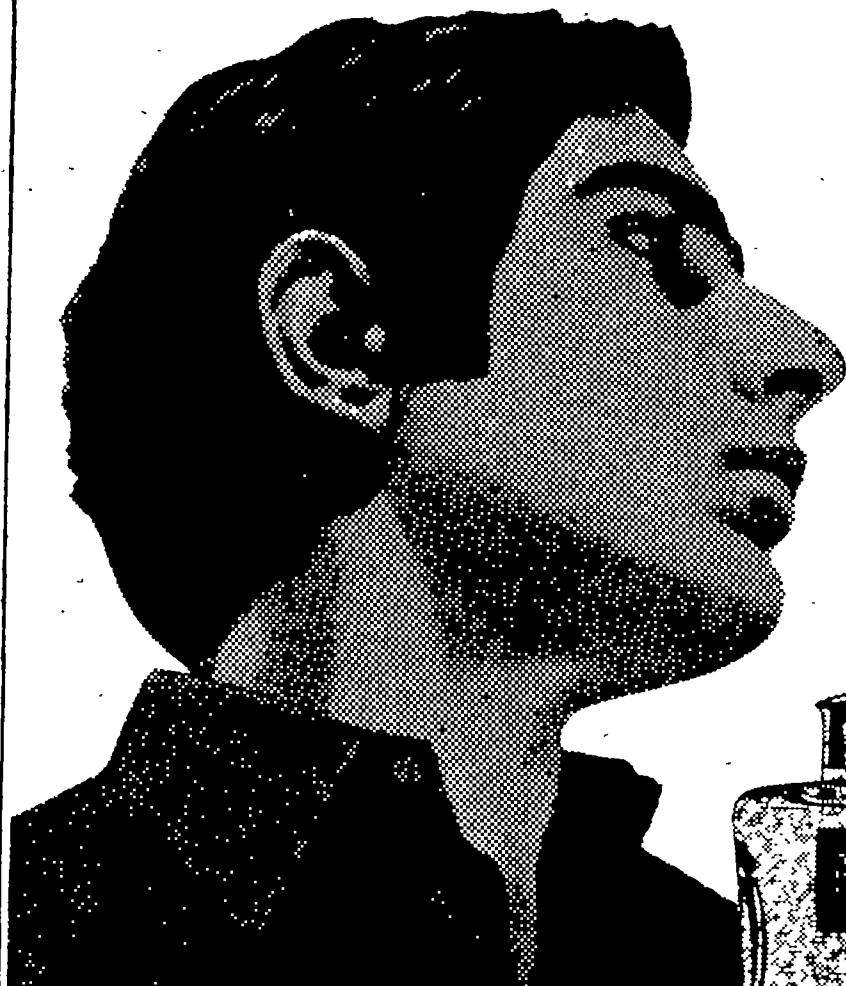
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emerge in countries like ours? It must be remembered that capitalism emerged in western countries over a long period of time, without hindrance from external sources, and by giving determined battle to the then prevailing feudal economic power structure. It was a progressive force in those societies. In our societies in the contemporary world, given free competition of laissez faire, can indigenous capitalists stand to the competition of foreign capitalists with the technological gap that prevails in the world? Will they not, to survive, act as mere agents of these foreign economic interests? Will then there be any urge to wage a determined struggle against the vestiges of feudalism and to increase the purchasing power of the vast mass of rural people without which no real industrial revolution can take place?

If, on the other hand, foreign economic interest, whether in the form of investment or 'aid', were prevented from participation, can we raise and mobilise the necessary investable capital without discarding parliamentary democracy. Can raw capitalism, with its fierce exploitation of labour, which is what leads to the accumulation of investable surplus, develop in the midst of today's expectations and aspirations—more so with no possibility of having a colony outside? And if it cannot,

and if the State perforce intervenes, with a gradually widening public sector and licenses and controls, can any capitalism flourish under these constraints?

Finally, what other economic system can we juxtapose to democracy? Socialism? Firstly, can we bring socialism through parliamentary democracy, and, secondly, if brought, can we retain democracy as a political institution?

These are admittedly stark questions (though perhaps inexpertly articulated here) which cannot be answered easily. But then it occurs to me that no plan for economic development of one of today's underdeveloped countries can ignore them. It is gratifying that V. M. Dandekar and Nilakantha Rath (*Poverty in India, Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay, 1971*) have probed some of these questions, but their solution—an annual outlay of Rs. 800 crores exclusively in work programmes to benefit the deprived—seems on the surface to be an utopia and should be carefully dissected. Perhaps a whole new issue of SEMINAR will be devoted to a dispassionate discussion of these questions.

**K. R. Bhattacharya,**

Central Food Technological Research Institute,  
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# Communication

THE subject of your Issue No. 143 (the Economic Agenda, July 1971) naturally demanded instant attention. The result I cannot describe as gratifying. The first three articles did make a sincere effort at analysing some of the basic problems; but the rest, including the Book Reviews, dealt with commonplace issues with a great show of professional systematization and inevitably clothed in sociological and economic jargon and clichés.

The central point, namely the *relevance of the political structure* to economic development, seem to have been neatly skirted by all the contributors (perhaps with the sole exception of P. C. Joshi to a limited extent).

Can economic development occur without appropriate political backing? In this context it seems to me that an analysis of the relevance of our political system, viz., parliamentary democracy, to the task of economic reconstruction is central to the discussion. The problem must also take into consideration the reality of the division of today's world into economically developed and undeveloped countries, and the political and economic consequences of such a division. The following questions would then arise:

1. (a) Whom does parliamentary democracy benefit, in terms of the prevailing or contemplated developmental activity, in an underdeveloped country? Is it the society as a whole or only the privileged section of it?

(b) If the latter, can economic development at all occur without social justice, i.e., without the benefit of development accruing to the society as a whole?

2. Inasmuch as, historically, parliamentary

democracy as a political system arose as a reflection of capitalism as an economic system, and inasmuch as the two are most suited and complimentary to each other, can unfettered operation of capitalism lead to the development of today's underdeveloped countries choosing parliamentary democracy?

3. If classical parliamentary democracy and/or classical capitalism cannot achieve our economic objective, can we so modify one or both, or can we so juxtapose parliamentary democracy to some other economic system, that we succeed in our goal and at the same time do not discard parliamentary democracy altogether?

I do not claim that I know the answer to these questions; I can perhaps only raise more questions by way of an answer. It occurs to me that by the very socio-economic structure of the society, and by the very nature of parliamentary democracy, the fruits of all development invariably go to the privileged sections rather than to those who are really in need of it. That this is precisely what is happening in India is now common knowledge as a result of a number of contemporary studies. Whether this is inherent in the character of the political and economic systems or whether it can be avoided by appropriate techniques is another matter and needs to be thoroughly analysed. And whether development efforts can at all be supported without simultaneous social justice is a moot question pointedly raised by a recent UN Survey (Social Development in Asia, UN Economic and Social Council, Commission for Social Development, 22nd Session, March 1971).

Again, in today's economically divided world, is it possible for true capitalism to

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sale prices at different points in space and/or time were accounted for, by transport and/or carrying costs and that the profit margins were not excessive. Further, as Jai Krishna and Jha themselves admit 'the private traders do help, to some extent, in evening out seasonal and inter-seasonal fluctuations' thus meeting precisely the same objectives that buffer stocks are expected to serve.

As regards the twin objectives of buffer stock operations, namely, evening out year-to-year availability of foodgrains affected by fluctuations in domestic productions and stabilizing prices, through a simple model, C. H. Shah has shown that a rigidly interpreted policy of holding availabilities constant may result in wider price fluctuations and vice versa. He has also noted that a policy of holding prices constant would result in fluctuations in the income of farmers.

At the seminar, complete neutralization of year-to-year fluctuations in availabilities was ruled out as a non-feasible objective. This judgement was arrived at in the following way. An analysis of production and per capita availability of foodgrains between 1949-50 and 1964-65 showed that a buffer stock equal to 10 per cent of the domestic production would have been required for equalising supplies in 19 out of every 20 years. But, fluctuations in production have been much sharper since 1964-65 and there was also the unusual situation of two consecutive severely adverse seasons. It was recognised that 'two contrary considerations are involved in projecting this past experience over the next period of 1969-70 to 1973-74. Since the New Strategy is still at an experimental stage, the possibility of some unexpected setbacks cannot be ruled out. On the other hand, since the introduction of the high-yielding varieties will be heavily concentrated in irrigated areas and areas with assumed rainfall, production may be less prone to fluctuations due to weather conditions.'

Thus, there was no clear picture of the likely buffer stock requirement for complete neutralisation of year-to-year fluctuations. Nevertheless, a judgement was made that 'a buffer stock of about 10 million tonnes (which is about 10 per cent of the production in the base period 1968-69) would be required if situations of excess or shortfall in productions are to be met in 19 out of every 20 years.' At this stage, the cost of a buffer stock of this size was considered. 'On the basis of the present average procurement prices and incidentals, the initial cost of 10 million tonnes of goodgrains going into buffer stock will work out to as much as Rs. 900 crores' with an additional carrying cost of Rs. 80 crores.

It is assumed that an additional 1.4 million tonnes of storage capacity would be required for feeding the public distribution system, thus making for a total requirement of storage capacity for 11.4 million tonnes. The existing capacity will accommodate 4 million tonnes. The cost of building storage capa-

city for the balance of 7.4 million tonnes is put at Rs. 137 crores at the rate of Rs. 185 per tonne. It is asserted, that 'it would indeed be difficult to find the financial resources of the above magnitudes under the Fourth Five-Year Plan.' Instead, a buffer stock of 7 million tonnes with which 'it may be possible to deal with situations of excess or shortfall in production in nearly two out of every three years' was suggested by Ram Saran of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and was accepted at the seminar.

The manner of arriving at the level of buffer stock, outlined above, leaves several questions unanswered. Thus, the basic problem of choosing whether to use a part of domestic production (plus imports) even in a so-called 'good' year to build a buffer stock and carry it for a year or even two years to even out supplies in a bad year instead of planning for a higher level of investment with all its attendant real income benefits, and meeting shortfalls in supplies in a later year through imports is not explicitly analysed in any of the papers in the volume. Against the definite initial loss of real income in the shape of investment opportunities foregone and the cost of storage, the gain from buffer stocks would be quicker supplies to areas of shortfall in a 'bad' year—in that imports would take about 8 to 10 weeks to arrive—and a possible difference between the purchase prices relevant for the two alternatives.

If the buffer stocks are to be built up out of imports—concessional imports at that—it is possible that over time the terms may stiffen, though, with European agriculture also throwing up surpluses, even this is doubtful. If the buffer stocks are to be built up out of internally procured grains, this raises the whole question of procurement prices and the inevitable lobbying that goes with the determination of these prices. Here, again, our experience of what happens to the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission does not inspire any confidence that they would bear any relation to the demand-supply situation.

It may be argued that reliance on imports to meet shortfalls in domestic supplies instead of buffer stocks is not acceptable for political reasons and, in fact, such an argument is not implicit, and in some cases explicit, in the papers of this volume. But, clearly, a question of trade-off is involved and that even those who suggest a buffer stock of 7 million tonnes do not attach an infinitely large premium on complete self-sufficiency in foodgrains is clear when they accept that 'this quantity would obviously be insufficient to meet severe shortfalls in production over two consecutive years, but...that if such a situation arises, recourse to imports would become inevitable.' (p. 5.)

Even if one accepts the overall judgement that a buffer stock of 7 million tonnes is required, it is somewhat disturbing that estimates of cost—especially of construction of additional storage capacity—put out by the Food Corporation of India (F.C.I.)

or the Food Ministry are accepted by the participants of the seminar (with the possible exception of A. M. Khusro) without explicitly going into the choices in respect of location, technique of storage, etc. And even a difference of Rs. 35 per tonne in the cost of construction of storage capacity between the FCI estimate (Rs. 150) and that of the Ministry is not deemed worthy of comment. The bland statement by I. C. Puri and R. Srinivasan that 'the crucial problems of the size of storage capacity and its relevance to (i) pattern of production and consumption in the country and (ii) the pattern of movements of stocks are all matters that are capable of resolution in a manner that unit costs in disposition prior to issues are reduced to a minimum' is truly staggering.

As regards price-stabilization, the question of the level at which prices are to be stabilized, a question which typically divided producers and consumers, hardly receives any serious analysis in this volume. We have Dantwalla's shrewd observation that '... it is exceedingly difficult to term a particular level of price as low or high. Apart from the inevitable political considerations and lobbies representing different 'interests', no firm economic criteria (devoid of value judgements) could be adduced to define high and low prices even for a given time period. The sharp difference in views over the procurement prices recommended by the Agricultural Prices Commission gives ample foretaste of the type of situation the Buffer Stock Agency (B.S.A.) will have to face...'

Even when the level at which prices are to be stabilized is agreed upon there is still the question of how rigidly the price stabilization is to be interpreted. The consensus at the seminar was that it should only mean that price-movements are restricted to a range around the chosen level. Vague as this prescription is, it is certainly better than Jai Krishna and Jha's statement: 'the range within which prices are to be allowed to fluctuate will have to be a flexible range rather than a rigid frame.' (p. 46, emphasis supplied)

I have commented upon only those parts of the volume under review which in my view deal with the major issues regarding a policy of Foodgrains Buffer Stocks in India. For the rest, readers are referred to an excellent summary of the discussion at this seminar by M. L. Dantwalla.

K. Sundaram

**MANUFACTURING PROBLEMS IN INDIA** by  
Jack Baranson. Syracuse University Press, New  
York, 1967.

While recounting the experience of the Kirloskar Cummins joint venture in the manufacture of NH 220 diesel engines, Jack Baranson in his *Manufactur-*

*ing Problems in India* discusses the dangers besetting international transfers of fairly sophisticated technology in India. He emphasises two kinds of problems: the first in the realm of national economic planning, and the other in the micro-sphere of the actual technology transplant.

Baranson attributes some of the blame for the proper appreciation of the original *raison d'etre* of the government's import substitution policies. These, Baranson concludes, foster a large number of high-cost inefficient industries feeding on the diseconomies of 'smaller scale, the dearth of critical factor resources and gaps in supporting industrial capability'. One feels that Baranson's criticism of import substitution policies suffers from a lack of proper appreciation of the original *raison d'etre* of such measures; the need to direct investment and imports into the priority industries (e.g., heavy engineering in the second five-year plan) while at the same time contending with a persistently negative balance of payments, in a rather hostile export environment.

Nevertheless, the evidence he cites, underlines the continuing need to focus industrialisation policies more purposefully on a more definite, even if smaller range of priority sectors, to support those sectors with an assured low-cost supply of basic requirements and foreign exchange, and to focus policy instrument on their development instead of dissipating resources and energies on toothpaste or steel furniture or sixteen different types of water meters.

In the current scheme of things, certain questions crucial for successful technology transfer, still cry out for attention,—particularly at the project level. First, there is the issue of factor endowments. Should exchange rate, credit and fiscal policies be designed to lower the price of capital or to augment employment and 'upgrade' labour. Second, there is the whole penumbral area of ancillaries development: there is no tacit demarcation of spheres of activity between large industrialists and small entrepreneurs; and very little by way of a well-knit programme covering the whole range of issues bugging ancillaries—production know-how, the choice of materials, quality control, inspection, labour training and marketing. An appreciation of the technological constraints, scale, complementarities, succumbs to fears about the 'ill effects of monopoly'. Third, there is the question of market orientation. Should a project be designed to serve the domestic economy or to make inroads into foreign markets? The decision will dictate national R & D policy, quality standards, foreign procurement policies and the proper phasing of cost-competitiveness.

The private licensee of technology has to be on his toes right from the start. The Kirloskar Cummins venture foundered on a gross over-expectation of demand. Though an export stipulation was built into the agreement by government, (the high costs of small scale over the initial years ruled out export), the Kirloskar Cummins venture hung on the

domestic demand of original equipment manufacturers (of tractors, shovels, earth movers) which failed to materialise. Was this failure really a concomitant of the government shift in planning priorities to agriculture, or was it a case of a hasty market survey? One would like to know more. In any event, a more careful market appraisal should have gone hand in hand with a detailed survey of supplier capabilities if the aim was indeed to produce the Cummins engine and to meet Cummins' standard of quality and performance. A certain haphazardness also marked the ordering of equipment—shortages on the one hand and idle equipment on the other. One wonders whether a fuzzy demarcation of responsibilities marred the venture from the start.

The failure of demand limited the scale of production—already a mere 2.5 per cent of the Cummins operation at Columbus, thus aggravating the problem of domestic procurement. Manufacturing requirements at the Poona plant were designed to produce 60 per cent of engine parts—as opposed to 40 per cent at Columbus. The small scale and in-plant fabrication resulted in an over-equipped plant. Much of the tool room and the quality control lab are more sophisticated than the equipment at Columbus—machinery ranges from the 'simplest Kirloskar lathes to the latest milling and boring machines' from abroad.

But, in view of the apparent exigencies of small scale, one wonders whether the capital output ratio (3.51 in 1965, 2.02 in 1969) could not have been brought more into the line with that at the Cummins plant at Shotts (786) in the UK where the 1964 output level of 2940 engines was closer to the Poona 1969 output of 1250 engines per year. This state of over-equipment went hand in hand with the over-building of plant. The cost of building was itself as much as 29 per cent of an already inflated total plant cost. Such over-capitalisation and over-construction is perhaps only partially due to bad planning. A combination of fiscal credit and foreign exchange rate advantages designed to remedy the lack of capital have also combined to lower the opportunity cost of capital.

Besides, inflation over the last decade may have been a force in inducing far-sighted entrepreneurs not only to plough back profits into fixed investment (and raw materials) but also into 'prestige' construction given the rather low cost relative to equipment and the rising value of real estate. One must not belittle either the sociological bias in a pre-industrial culture, in favour of imposing board rooms and grand structures. This at a time when the trend in industrial design is to provide not much more than a make-shift shelter for equipment, aimed at holding down the capital output ratio.

Small scale may not have been the only factor encouraging over-equipment at Poona. The ratio of manufacturing expenses to direct labour: 11.25 at Poona in 1969, compared to 3.55 at Shotts (1964), is

also a pointer. Though this is in part due to the differences in wage rates between Poona and Shotts, it does underscore the bias against employment-intensive policies in Indian industry. Baranson points out of course that a major difficulty in adopting labour-intensive techniques is 'that machine precision must be replaced by human skill'—still a scarce factor in India. He attributes Japan's ability to handle a sub-contracting sector efficiently, not only to her abundance of engineering and technical skills, but also to the higher level of machine labour skills and factory discipline developed over the past century.

But, industrial experience cannot be garnered in a day. The paradox can only be conquered by a deliberate policy of training of machine operators, foremen, shop managers. Over the last decade, however, the rise in the wage rate has raised the bogey of rapid labour turnover—especially of skilled manpower; labour unrest has provided an additional incentive to industrialists to plump for automatised equipment. Not only are labour requirements reduced but, paradoxically, an automatised factory imparts fewer skills than a less well equipped factory with a backbone of specialised workers. This brings one back again to some of the urgent problems besetting both government and private sector labour policy.

The capital-intensive bias, however, cannot wholly be blamed on Kirloskar. It is one thing to buy a sophisticated design, but quite another to be able to transform it to suit one's needs. Adaptation to fit given factor availabilities is a function of experience at working the design. In this sense, Cummins was better placed to take the lead in adaptation work. Indeed, Baranson states that many of the techniques adjusted to suit Poona (e.g., fuel plungers, tooth gears, crankshafts, oil pans, etc.) were really adaptations of methods used in Columbus 20-30 years ago when production was lower, labour cheaper and techniques more primitive.

However, one is not quite convinced that Columbus techniques even of two decades ago, are quite relevant to the Indian milieu. Baranson seems to miss the point on which Kirloskars might have been nearer the mark. Engine design and application must reflect a wide variety of factors: the physical environment, the transport system, highway codes and lay-out, the organisation of trucking, or alternatively the exigencies of other diesel engine uses, other product markets, the fuels available, servicing facilities, customer habits, etc. (see Table 1)—a range of factors which must differ radically in India from those characteristic of the U.S. Baranson devotes little space to the actual product changes made in Poona.

The need for change is underlined again by the inadequate nature of the supplier network available in India. In Japan a high degree of technical skill often marks production in small-scale sub-contracting workshops, but in India a skilled small scale sup-

plier network is still in the making. Much more effort has therefore to be expended on adaptation.

Baranson speaks of the responsibility of international corporations in adjusting 'industrial transplants to the emerging capabilities of a developing economy' but one wonders whether the very international nature of Cummins was not inimical to change. Though Cummins engines serve a 'wide variety of uses in the transportation, construction, mining and logging industries', 'most of the product innovations have been made in response to changing demands in the American market'. Besides, the international spread of Cummins' operations is based upon inter-changeability of parts, 'permitting world wide parts manufacture, engine assembly and servicing.' Hence, all changes in parts specifications must be applicable to the entire international manufacturing system.

Here lies the rub. Even differences in overseas manufacturing equipment may jeopardise international interchangeability by entailing changes in parts specifications even if the functions they serve remain unchanged. How much more unsettling must quality or product changes designed to suit the local market be to an internationally standardised ordering of activities. Such tendencies to inflexibility must be re-inforced in particular situations where an international corporation is, as Baranson says, unwilling to 'risk investments in developing new knowledge for environments as exotic as those of the developing countries'. Corporate attitudes to risk-taking and profit-making place important limitations on adaptation. One is slightly disturbed therefore to find that one of the major differences between the Kirloskars and Cummins involved time perspectives in investment returns—the Kirloskars disagreed with Cummins 'profits now' policy.

This is not, however, an argument for 'downgrading of quality'. Changes which anticipate the needs of a poor road system, shorter hauls, greater fuel economy as opposed to time economies, low initial costs, possibly shorter life spans and on-the-spot repairs, substitution of locally available materials—may imply major changes in the product without necessarily sacrificing technical efficiency. In fact, it is perhaps not too much to claim that government's domestic content policy, which Baranson blames as one of the major causes of cost inflation, may have served to stimulate the major part of whatever R & D takes place in Indian industry.

Where, however, international corporations have perhaps a duty to be uncompromising is in their advocacy of strict quality control of materials, parts and of the final product once the decision about quality specifications has been made. After all, if the Japanese have been able to cut loose from their pre-war reputation of being shoddy industrialists, it is largely owing to their fanatical faith in 'Shewhartism'. Perhaps an equally major contribution to the Indian industrial environment would be the introduction of production control. In situations of shortage, successful management often assumes the

character of ad hoc 'shirt-sleeve operations', but a long run perspective must acknowledge the need to institute disciplined husbanding of parts, process sheets, tooling, accessories, and detailed time-phasing of all operations. However, the trade-off between the gains from learning (operation, production and quality control, or know-how generally) and the high foreign exchange costs of foreign technicians, advisers, managers, may seem quite different depending on whether one is the licensor or the licensee.

Kirloskar-Cummins solved its dilemma (continuous losses through 1965) by moving into parts production for Kirloskar's Simpler 'B' engines and later by supplementing the NH-220 by three older Cummins' engines, a truck engine, a horizontal bus diesel and a construction diesel. Though the Kirloskars earned enough foreign exchange on their 'B' engines to pay for the continuing high import requirements for the original NH engines, the Cummins venture turned out to be rather an expensive solution to the 'B' engine parts problem. Besides the proliferation of models with a little parts overlap seems to have entailed additional fixed investments.

The Baranson account ends rather abruptly, one feels. The contemporary sequel and a Kirloskar perspective on the problem might help one to view the venture in the round.

Nevertheless, *Manufacturing Problems in India* is in a sense the first of its kind. It is a down-to-earth, concise, well-written attempt systematically to demarcate all the problems which assail attempts at successful technology transfer in India.

Jayati Mitra

#### **TOWARDS FULL EMPLOYMENT : International Labour Organisation, Geneva, 1970**

In most exercises on development planning, targets are set in terms of rates of growth of output, and employment is accorded a secondary role. But in this case study of Colombia, the ILO reverses the roles, thereby making employment a primary objective of development policy.

The strategy of the employment oriented development proposed ascribes to the manufacturing industry an increasing share of the labour force, i.e., employment into the agricultural sector is expected to grow less than the increase in the rural labour force—but the increase is not to be absorbed entirely outside the agricultural sector. If we identify agricultural output with wage goods, agricultural output must rise to meet the demands of the manufacturing sector. Given the availability of unsettled arable tracts, this is not as difficult as it would have been if the demand was to be met only by increases in land and labour productivity. How this would affect agricultural and industrial prices is debatable. But the need to provide incentives to the agricul-

turist remains and, therefore, the government's role in this field can hardly be a passive one.

At the same time, the strategy proposes curbs on acceleration of non-agricultural productivity—which with a given targeted rate of growth of output implies greater employment. Although this proposal is very cautiously presented, it must be realised that the foreign exchange constraint necessitates that the competitive position of exports be maintained. How, at any rate, this is to be achieved is not made at all clear. Questions of feasibility are adroitly sidestepped—the ILO does not attempt to build up a development model for Colombia.

The term employment is taken to imply work which ensures a decent standard of living to the employee. This resolves some of the conflict between rates of growth of income and employment, for the strategy puts a premium on the incomes of the lower income groups, the under-employed. The emphasis on social services is well placed as a step towards equity. Here the availability of unsettled land would ease the conflict between growth and equity. But the danger of resources being shifted out of land is present.

The link between equity and employment suggested is a tenuous one. The report suggests that greater equity implies a shift towards more labour intensive commodities (besides easing the balance of payments position). So far as the employment aspect is concerned, the demand from the lower income classes, though of different composition, is yet one for standardised commodities. Besides, the argument for equity can well stand on its own and to link it to employment seems unnecessary—especially when no obvious link exists.

The classic argument relating greater income equality to higher savings *ceteris paribus* is given short shrift here. In Colombia the experience so far has been one of conspicuous consumption by the higher income groups. If a land ceiling is enforced, and if the production technology is scale neutral, then output would not suffer as a consequence of land reform. Consumption may rise as a consequence, but a selective land tax and a tax on the incomes of the rich in the cities would generate a certain amount of public savings. Another means of achieving greater income equality, without land reform, would be by taxing the consumption of the higher income groups. But in this case there is the danger of the tax being paid by depleting savings—which is an expensive way of staying at the same place. Therefore, the former strategy seems superior if the necessary tax policies are feasible and if the technology does not display increasing returns in a substantial way.

Bringing in the savings aspect would make necessary the specification of a trade off between the 'short' and the 'not so short' run. The ILO seems to have short-run employment as an aim, but such a policy may boomerang on itself and be non-optimal

in the longer run. Therefore, the choice of labour intensive techniques is not as inevitable as is made out: in the longer run a premium would be placed on the surplus for re-investment. Again, the indirect employment creating potential of a capital intensive project may make it more attractive.

An employment policy must also specify terminal conditions and chalk out the investment programme implied by such a strategy. This would imply in fact constructing a full scale development model, which is beyond the ILO's modest aims. It is still reasonable to expect a certain phasing out of the employment programme. This is ignored, or rather the indirect employment created by the projects is considered negligible.

The very fact that the market has not generated full employment so far makes the role of the State very important. One wonders what theory of the State the ILO has in mind. Would indicative planning suffice? If not, the government must either raise the resources for development or build up a strong public sector.

Bimal Kalcker

#### **SURPLUS MANPOWER & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MYSORE** (an evaluation report on rural manpower programme) By D. M. Nanjundappa.

The author is Professor of Economics in Karnataka University, Mysore, and this work undertaken for the Government of Mysore, is an attempt to evaluate various aspects of the Rural Manpower Programme (RMP) designed to supplement the regular development programmes. The programme was implemented during the third plan in 32 selected Community Development (C.D.) blocks with the twin objectives of creating rural employment and raising agricultural productivity. Particular attention to unemployment among agricultural workers during the slack season was planned. Finances were provided from the Central Government Budget, but the burden of implementation was to rest with the State Government and more particularly with the Block Organization. RMP works selected for execution included soil conservation, minor irrigation, market roads and afforestation.

Coming to the study itself, the coverage was confined to North Mysore State; intensive field investigations were carried out on the basis of multi-stage sampling and, additionally, secondary sources were used.

After detailed estimates of the incidence of open and disguised unemployment—for the busy and slack seasons, for sample villages and sample blocks—we come to the 'core' of the study, 'a closer look at employment effects of RMP Projects.'

The conclusion is that as a ratio of the amount of unemployment, the employment effects of RMP



Projects are negligible. In 1966, 1.4 per cent of unemployment in 3 blocks was taken care of, in other blocks less than 1 per cent. The slack season figure varies from 0.2 per cent to 2.1 per cent. Nor have RMP works created massive employment opportunities for the underemployed.

The really interesting figures are those of employment generated for every 100 rupees spent. The overall figure is 63 man days of employment with variation as between blocks, schemes, and from one year to the next. One useful fact thrown up by the figures is the relatively greater productivity of minor irrigation works from the point of view of employment vis-a-vis other schemes.

From the operational point of view, the most useful part of the study is the regrettably short section on a comparison of R.M.P. and C.D. Projects. However, only a start is made, and the comparison is hopelessly incomplete. Only expenditure: employment ratios are compared to reach the conclusion that R.M.P. works are relatively more labour intensive, and therefore justified, given creation of employment opportunities as a prime objective. A more detailed investigation of other aspects of these two alternatives would have invested the study with very much greater significance. Really what is required is some sort of a cost benefit analysis, keeping in mind all the relevant social and economic priorities. As it is, one does not know if

the shelving of R.M.P. projects after the third plan was justified.

Dr. Nanjundappa's comparison is too narrow to yield operationally meaningful conclusions—C. D. projects may be designed to serve a different purpose altogether—malaria eradication, for example, may receive priority attention while being less labour intensive than the R.M.P. projects. A deeper analysis in this area could have provided useful guidelines for policy and plan formulation, and also possibly strengthened the author's plea for continuing such special programmes on other considerations such as building up of private and community assets—figures of number of acres irrigated, number of miles of road constructed, etc., under the programmes are provided. But, again, it is difficult to extract any objective conclusions relevant to policy without recourse to figures from some alternative source.

For certain aspects there is such a wealth of figures obviously compiled with patient labour and diligence that they seem to promise a purposeful evaluation of alternative programmes in the chosen area. However, the operational conclusions are, in general, disappointingly naive; those very numbers are missing which, if supplied, would convey a fund of information for the planner and the executor at all levels. What is given in the study is interesting but what is missing in it is vital.

Anuradha Luthe

## ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT UNEMPLOYMENT?

Then your views and suggestions are valuable.

The Expert Committee on Unemployment invites views and comments that will help the Committee in the task assigned to it.

The Committee is interested in the following aspects:—

- (1) Directions in which programmes in the Fourth Five Year Plan could be more employment-oriented.
- (2) Strategy for generating employment, both short term and long term including technical, financial and fiscal measures.
- (3) Specific programmes to promote productive employment among the educated unemployed in general and the technical personnel in particular and to suggest measures to rectify the imbalance between the out-turn of educated and technical persons on the one hand and the available employment opportunities on the other.

Views and comments are welcome from individuals as well as associations.

*Please send your communications before July 15, 1971.*

**N. S. Pandey**  
Member-Secretary  
Expert Committee on  
Unemployment

**Vigyan Bhavan Annexe**  
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New Delhi-1

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# Communication

PLEASE permit me to make a few comments on the article of Professor Sisir Gupta in the June 1971 issue of SEMINAR dealing with Bangla Dosh.

Though he is supposed to pose the problem with which the people of Bangla Dosh are faced, the whole of his article except the last three paras is devoted to a narrative of the history of events which led to the present situation in that area. It would have been better if he had given more space to explaining why the situation in Bangla Dosh is today in the nature of a problem. A problem exists when we are unable to find a solution for it or when there is considerable difficulty in putting into practice the solution found. Sisir Gupta's observations in the last three paras (which alone deal with the problem) assume that the problem with which the people of Bangla Dosh are faced has been practically solved or is sure to be solved in the near future. This evidently creates the impression that there is really no problem at all.

Apart from this he makes two contradictory statements about it. In the first of the three paras he says: 'How long and protracted the struggle of the people of East Bengal will have to be is still uncertain.' In the next para he says: 'If the leaders in Islamabad are thinking that they would be able to occupy East Bengal for long they are gravely mistaken.' If they are unable to occupy East Bengal for long it means that the struggle cannot be long and protracted. Which of these two views does the Professor adhere to?

From what he says in the last two paras he seems to incline towards the second view—the view that the struggle will not be a prolonged one. He gives three reasons for holding it. But all the three reasons are based on wishful thinking and not on a correct reading of the situation. They are therefore highly misleading.

His first reason is that the West Pakistanis do not have the resources

necessary to conduct a massive anti-insurgency war so far away from their own land. He however forgets that the West Pakistanis are not conducting the war with their own resources but with those supplied by China, the USSR, the USA, Britain and the whole of the Islamic world in the West. China has now become a more active ally of Pakistan than in the past. It is she that is really fighting the war in East Bengal and there is no limit to her resources. In spite of India's hectic diplomacy she has not so far succeeded in convincing the USA or the USSR that they should not continue to aid Pakistan. Aid is flowing as usual. Even if direct military aid is stopped by the USA it is sure to be routed through Turkey and Iran. Saudi Arabia and other Muslim States are giving economic aid. Pakistan has also the moral sympathy of Malaysia and Indonesia. Pakistan is not isolated like India. Professor Gupta himself says that in the past also it was the crucial role played by American military aid that brought about the end of the first democratic government in East Bengal. It is therefore surprising that knowing all this Professor Gupta should have come to the conclusion that Pakistan would not be able to occupy East Bengal for long.

His second reason for arriving at the conclusion is 'The people of East Bengal are much tougher than they were thought to be. Their national determination has only been solidified by the brutal elimination of the cream of their elite.' Here again he forgets that there are several disruptive forces in East Bengal, that the fanatical Muslim League and other parties are active and that it is not difficult to set up a quisling government and proclaim to the world that autonomy has been granted to the people. Pakistan is carrying on an active anti-Hindu propaganda which made an

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effective appeal to the Bengali Muslims in the past. There is no organisation to counteract this or to coordinate the activities of the freedom fighters. Any guerilla war that they might resort to is bound to be a protracted one especially in view of the fact that they are untrained for the purpose and have no adequate supply of arms. Mere patriotism is not enough. As the great philosopher Spinoza said, right and might should go together.

Professor Gupta is much more mistaken in assuming that India will prevent the continued occupation of East Bengal by West Pakistan and this is the third reason for his conclusion that the struggle there cannot be a protracted one. There is, however, nothing to show that India will do anything effective to prevent it. It can be prevented only if India is prepared to use force against Pakistan. But the Government of India is so very much afraid of China and of so-called world public opinion that she will not go to war on this issue. Even though the government accepts that Pakistan has undertaken aggression against India by sending millions of refugees, it has preferred to sit with folded hands. No country with self-respect fails to use her defence forces when there is aggression against her. But this is just what India is doing. Government prefers

to have her border villages shelled by Pakistani armies, to have her security threatened by the numerous spies and saboteurs among the refugees and to see the growth of lawlessness and disorder all around. Government also prefers to go round the world with a beggar's bowl and to appeal for funds for the rehabilitation of the millions of refugees. Knowing all this, Sisir Gupta still thinks that India can prevent the occupation of East Bengal by Pakistan. Unless the Government shows greater courage, comes to possess more self-confidence and is prepared to take the risk of waging war with Pakistan, the Professor's prophecy that India can further the cause of freedom in Bangla Desh is bound to fail. There is so far nothing to show that the government will develop these qualities at least in the near future.

From all this it follows that there is no basis for the Professor's conclusion that the leaders in Islamabad are gravely mistaken for thinking that they can occupy East Bengal for long. Really, it is he that is mistaken for thinking otherwise.

**M. Venkatarangaya,**  
Professor of Politics (Retd.),  
Andhra and Bombay Universities,  
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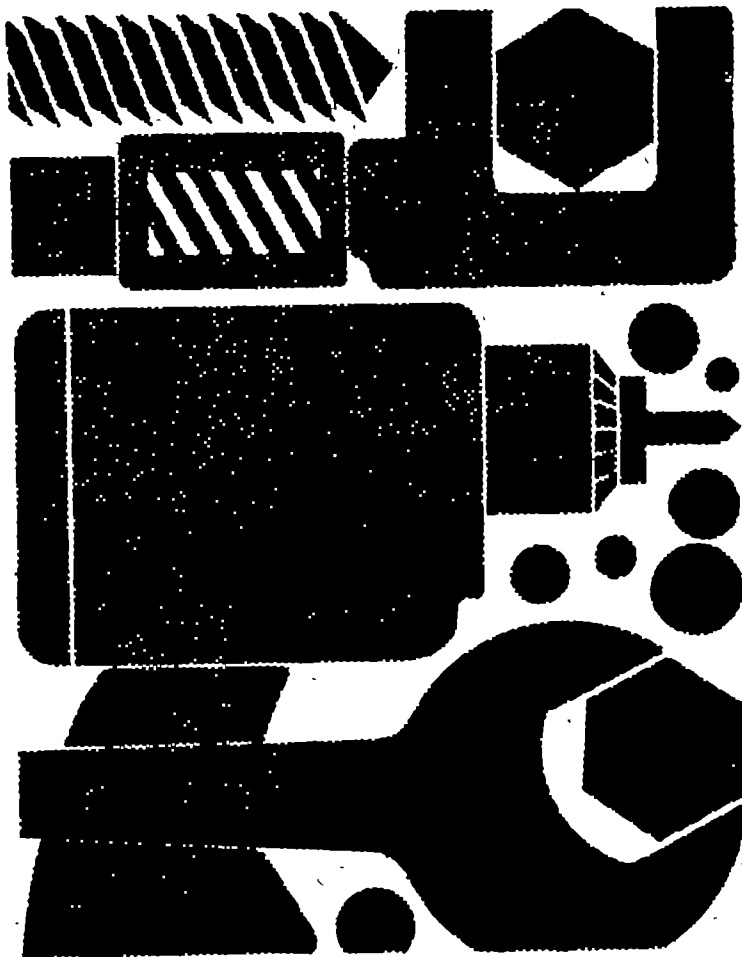
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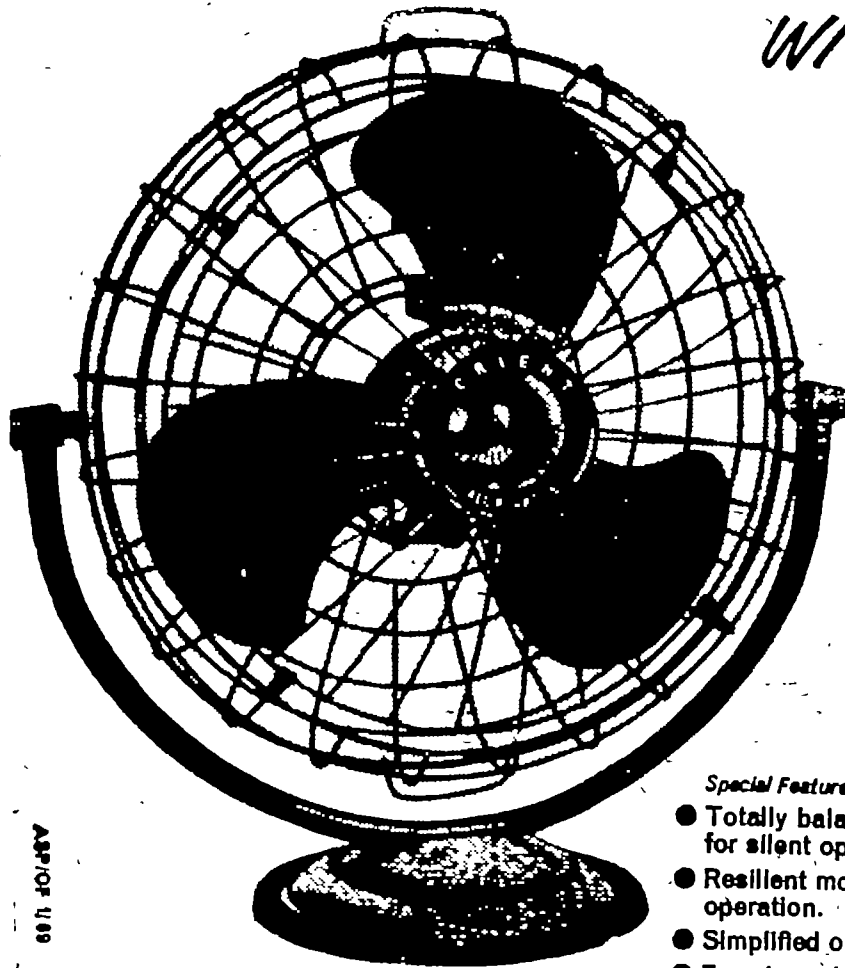
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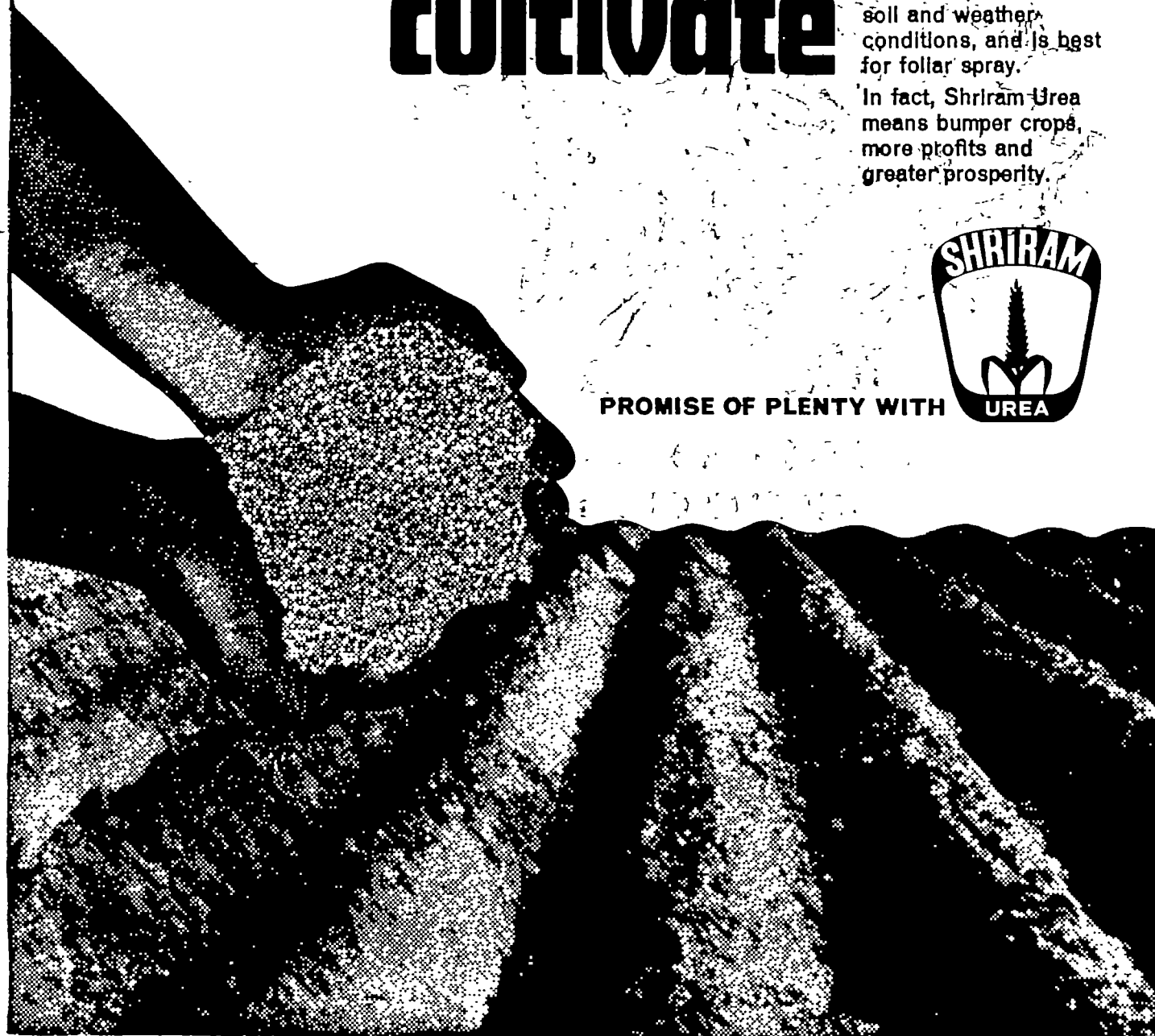
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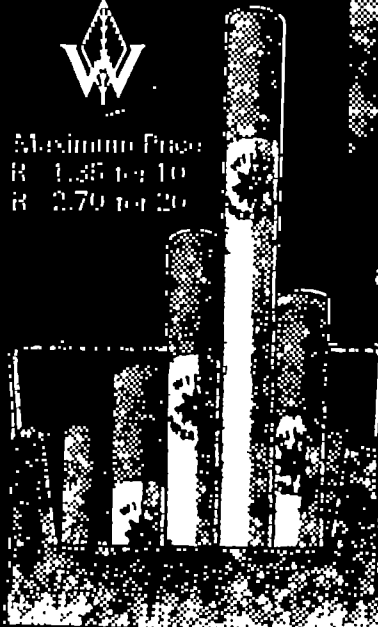
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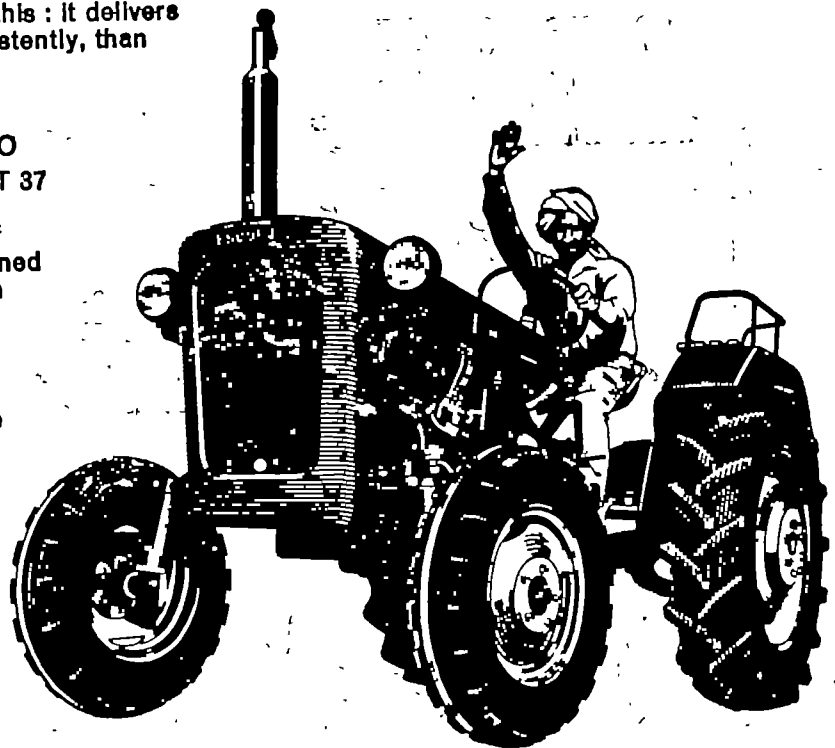
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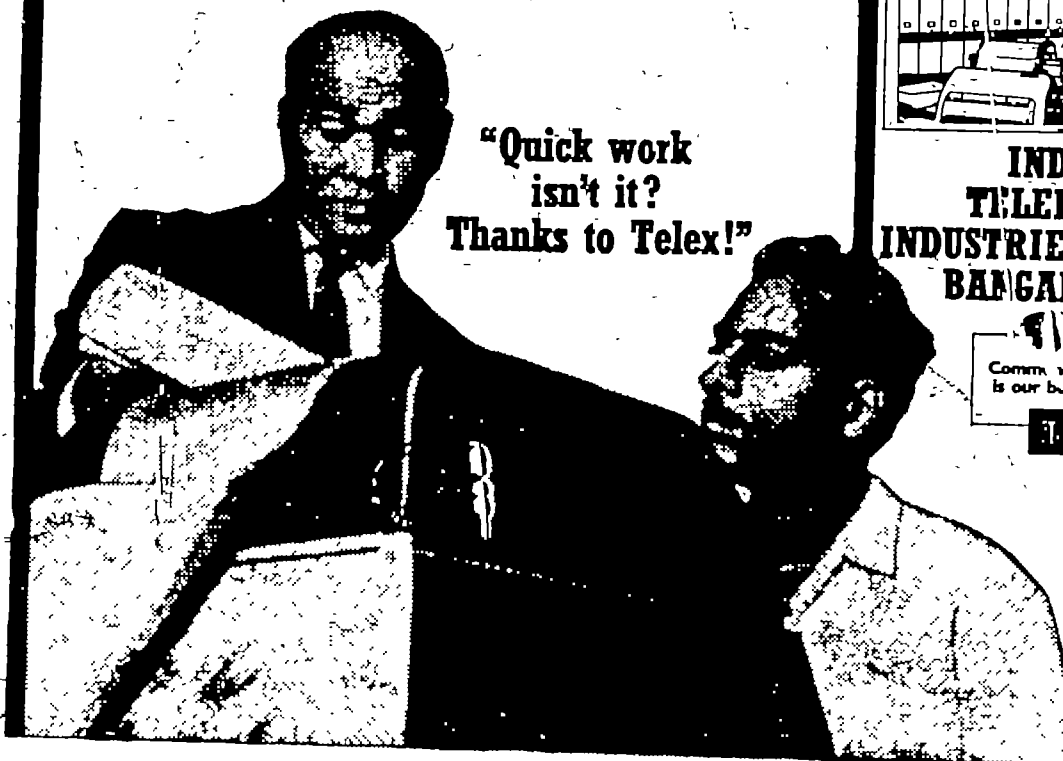
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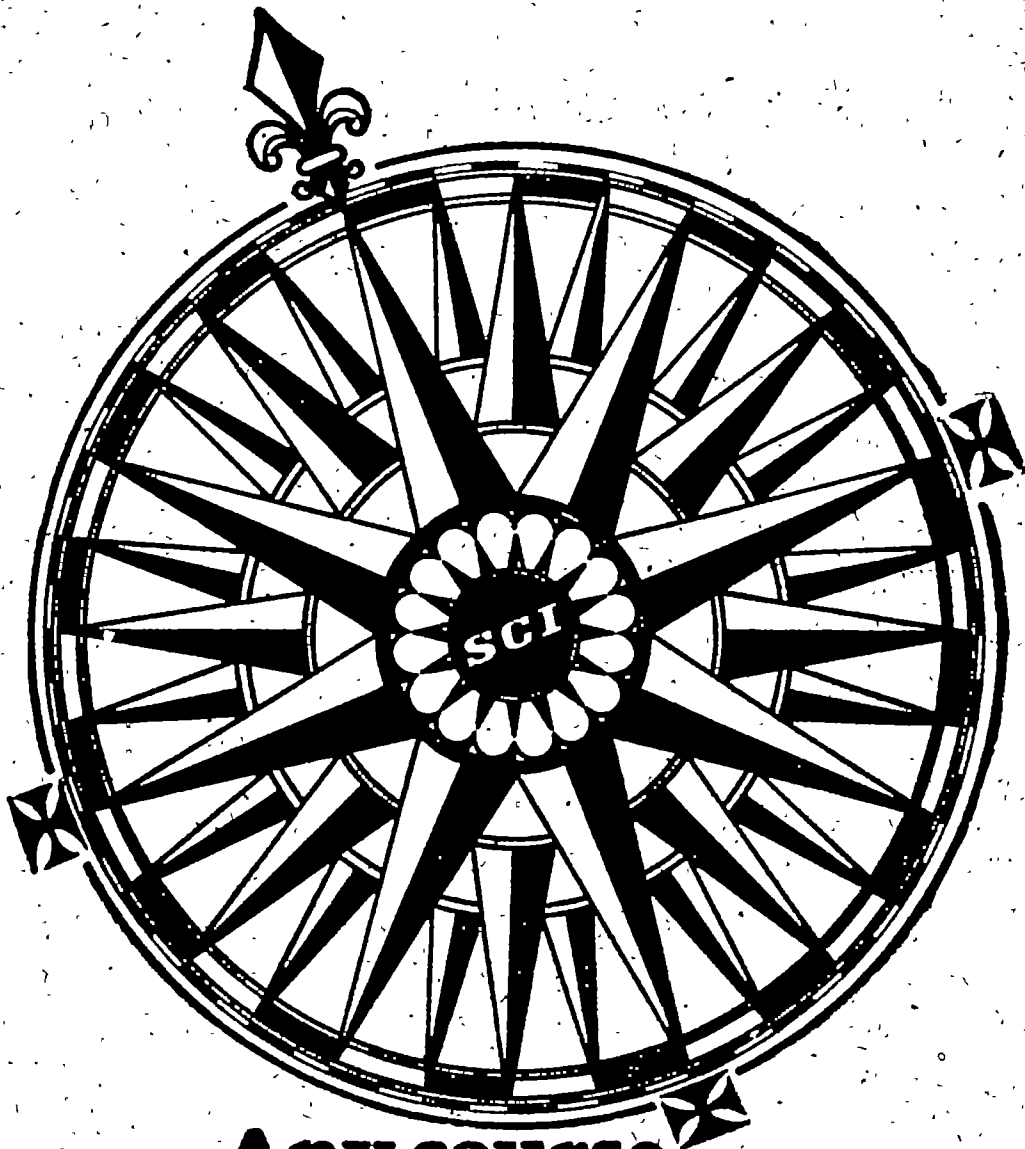
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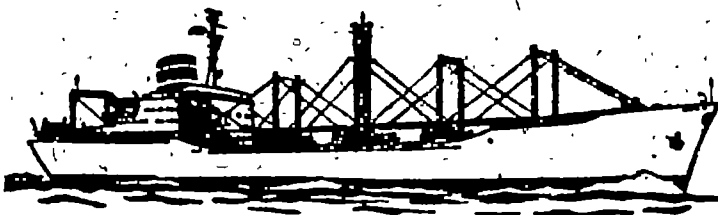


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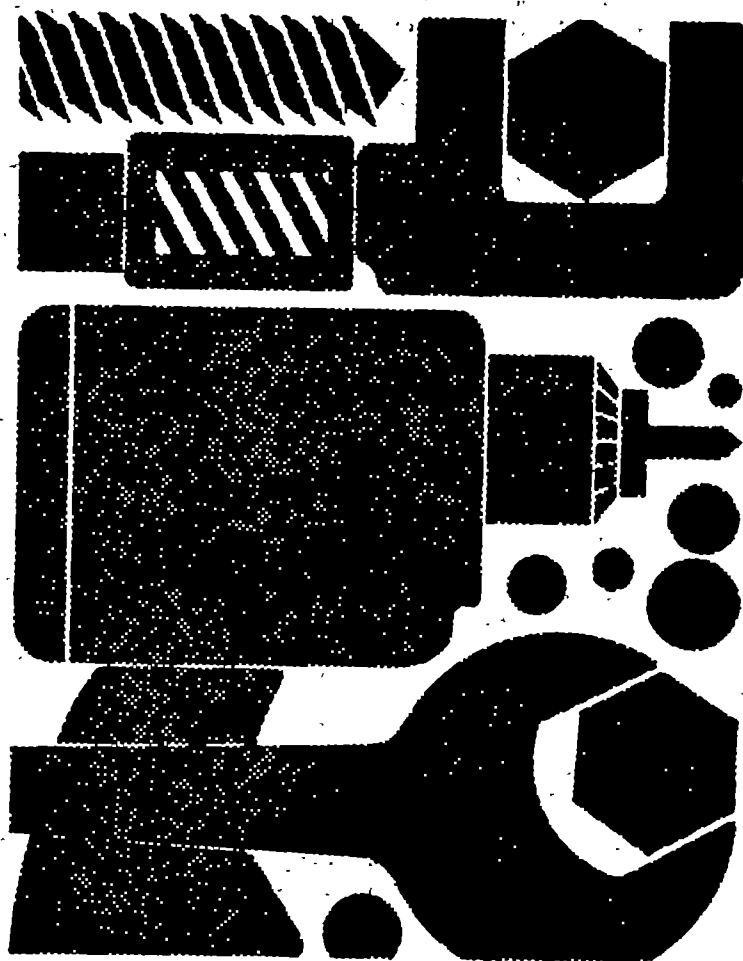
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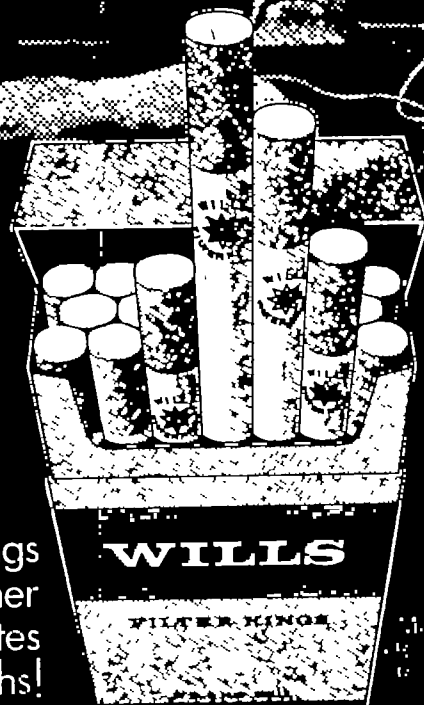
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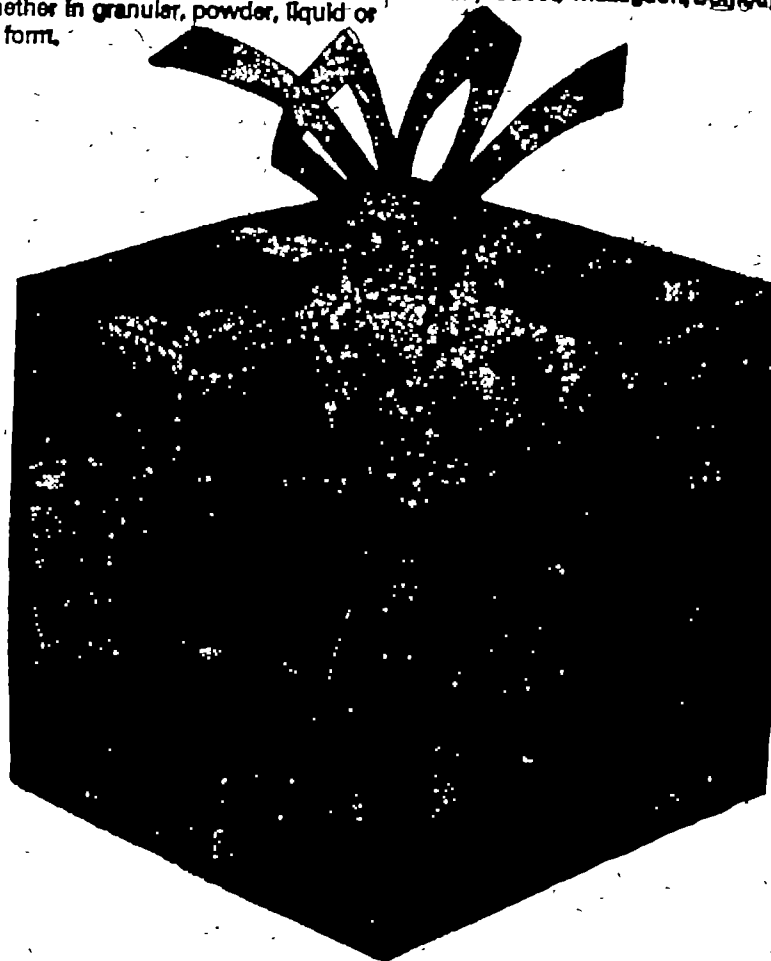
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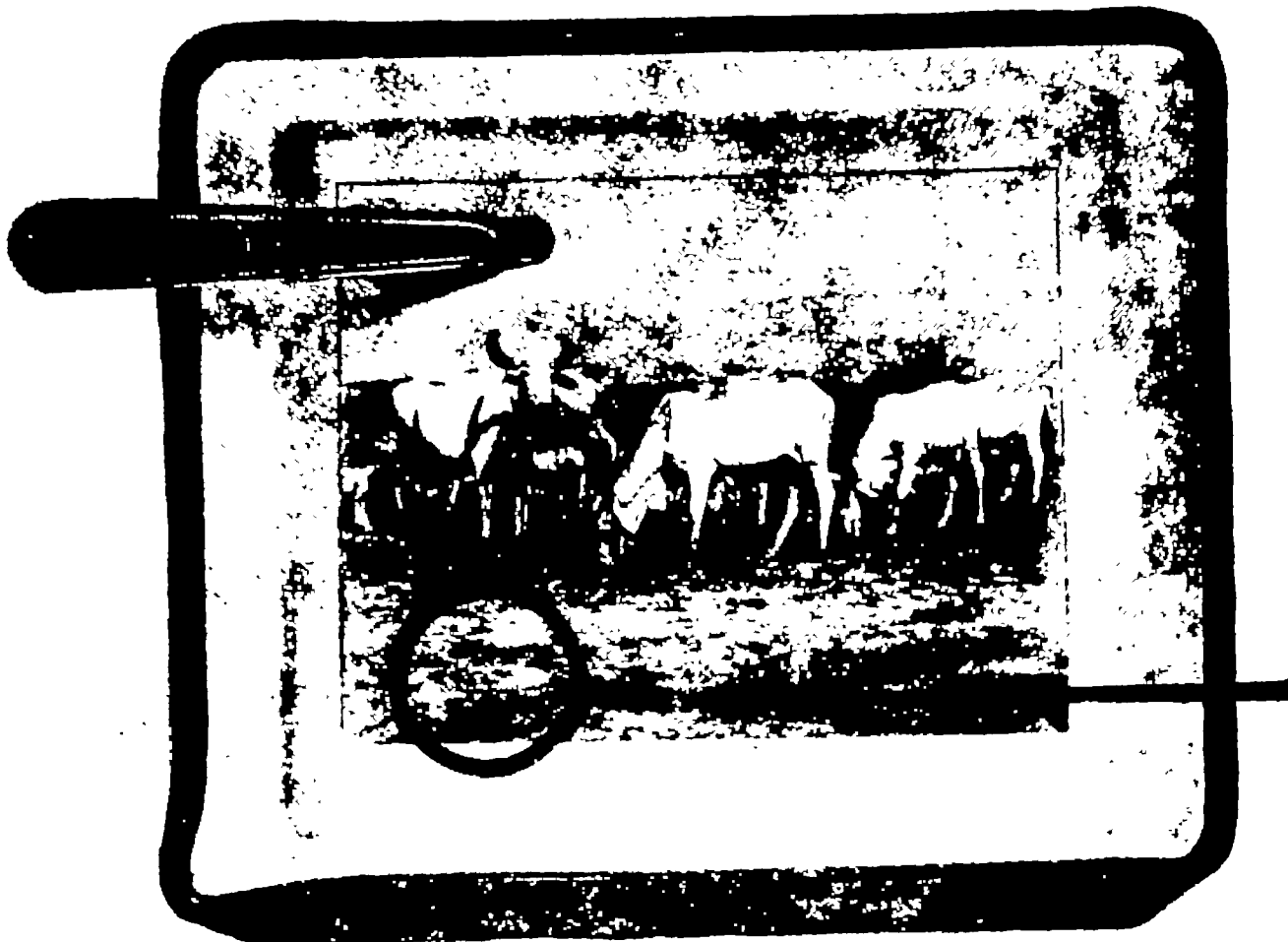
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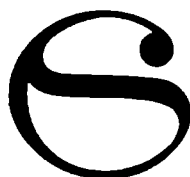
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# 144

## THE 1971 ELECTIONS

a symposium which  
analyses a crucial  
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### THE PROBLEM

A brief survey  
of the election results

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# The problem

POLITICAL arithmetic is different from the common variety. Ignorance of the difference led pundits into blind alleys. For instance, it was argued that after the split in the Congress Party, its traditional poll of forty-odd per cent would be shared, however unequally, between the two splinters. Even if the ruling Congress received the largest proportion, it would still have to share the vote with the rival body. If  $a$  is the total vote of the undivided Congress Party, the division generally anticipated was according to the following formula:

$$a = 3a/4 + a/4.$$

The ruling Congress would get three-fourths of the undivided Congress party's vote and the organisation Congress one-fourth. What actually happened defied the laws of conventional logic:

$$a - a/4 = a + a/15.$$

In short, the 10.5 per cent votes polled by the Congress-O, far from diminishing the support of the ruling Congress, augmented it (Table I). For every vote taken away by the Nijalingappa group, 1.3 votes were attracted to the Indira Congress! Voters did not behave like abstract numbers and analysts addicted to conventional statistical operations were derailed.

The other fallacy about the election was that the Grand Alliance and the Congress-R were evenly matched. Congress-O was supposed to have drained away about one-fourth of the vote of the undivided Congress. This amounted to something over ten per cent in terms of 1967 election figures; the Jana Sangh had won 9.29% and the Swatantra 8.54%. Add to these 4.89% vote

gained by the SSP and you get about 30%. Congress-R, even with the support of the PSP and CPI, would come to only a little more than that figure. In other words, the Grand Alliance and the Congress-R were expected to get approximately the same number of seats. Even allowing for Mrs. Gandhi's charisma, her party was considered certain to fall considerably short of a majority of seats in the Parliament.

The underlying assumption is not perverse and it is used in election forecasts in all democratic countries. The assumption is that the party loyalty of the voter is essentially stable and calculable. Shifts in party preferences are marginal, and changes in the electoral fortunes of parties are decided by relatively small shifts in the votes amounting to a few percentage points. The election strategy of the Grand Alliance was thus calculated very carefully. Its object was to assemble a potential voting strength equal to that of Congress-R, thus denying it the advantage of winning seats against a splintered opposition by plurality falling short of an absolute majority of votes in a constituency. One thing was considered to be certain: Mrs. Gandhi would not be returned with a majority of seats, and this would allow big businessmen and political operators to manipulate the membership in order to produce a majority.

What happened was entirely different: or, three times one equals two:  $a + a + a = 2a$ . The total votes gained by the Grand Alliance were only 21.9%, some ten per cent less than their separate votes in the 1967 election. It is

important to note that Congress-O did not fail to deliver its share of votes, namely 10.5%. The party that failed most was the Swatantra, whose votes slumped from 8.54% in 1967 to 3.1% in 1971. Nor was this decline unexpected. Observers had noted the continuing disintegration of the Swatantra after the 1967 election. The decline was marked strongly in Gujarat, Madras (Tamil Nadu) and Mysore. It was evident well before the election that the Swatantra Party had failed to strike roots and its successes depended either on the support of the Rajas and Maharajas or other locally influential individuals who could benefit from particular electoral adjustments, such as that with the DMK in Tamil Nadu in 1962 and 1967.

Equally striking was the decline in the support gathered by the SSP. From 3.8% in 1967 its vote tumbled to a mere 1% this year. Unlike the Swatantra, whose decline was visible over the years, the setback to the SSP was unexpected but not surprising. In an election which registered a strong swing to the Left, the SSP chose to ally itself with the Right-wing parties. It was severely punished by the electorate—the number of seats won by it declining to 3 this year from 23 in 1967. One cannot argue, therefore, that the electorate was indifferent to ideological considerations.

We can only speculate, but it is likely that the SSP would have fared considerably better if it had allied itself with Leftist forces. If figures speak, they seem to tell SSP leaders that their basic approach is misguided. They

believe that a weakening of the Congress Party—which is the strongest political force in the country and, thus, by definition, the strongest bulwark of the status quo—automatically weakens the power of the vested interests. The forces of revolution are thereby strengthened. Obviously, the electorate thinks otherwise. It regards the Congress Party as a party of the Left and of potentially revolutionary significance. Even if the SSP did not wish to ally itself directly with the Congress, it might have made some arrangements with other Leftist parties, such as the PSP and CPI or gone it alone.

The Jana Sangh also has suffered a decline in its poll from 9.29 to 7.31 per cent. Some party spokesmen have explained this decline as partly due to the small number of candidates set up by it. They numbered 156 this year compared to 238 in the previous election, a drop of more than one-third. The other explanation offered is that the alliance with Congress-O and Swatantra reduced the credibility and popularity of the Jana Sangh. On the first point one has to add that every all-India party except the CPM set up fewer candidates in 1971 than in 1967. Despite this and despite the split, Congress-R won a larger percentage of votes. The conclusion is inescapable that there was a substantial outflow of votes from practically all political parties to the Congress-R. The Jana Sangh lost votes to the Congress no less than the other political parties except the CPM, which gained votes absolutely and percent-wise.

However, the CPM was the only national political party to put up a larger number of candidates this year than in the earlier election. But it should be noted that the votes won per contested seat by the CPM declined heavily, from 1,05,875 per contested seat in 1967 to 87,185 in 1971, a decline of some 15%. Comparison of votes per contested seat won by the different parties shows some interesting developments, but we shall come to that on another occasion.

The argument has been made by some commentators that Congress-R has in fact not won a majority of votes and hence the majority of seats obtained by the party in the Lok Sabha represents a spurious gain. As Masani put it, 'after all, to get 43% of the vote is not such a startling achievement as to need any magical explanation.' This is at odds with the number of seats won by the party for 'Undoubtedly, the widespread misconception about the nature of the election results has been caused by the fact that the ruling Congress managed to get as many as 350 seats out of 520 in the Lok Sabha.' Table II shows one calculation of the seats the different parties would have obtained under a system of proportional representation. Thus, Congress-R would have won only 222 instead of 350 where Congress-O would have obtained 54 instead of 16. And so all down the line—every opposition party would have gained additional seats. To be sure, it would not have been a great achievement for the Swatantra, whose score under proportional representation (p.r. system) would have been 18 rather than the actual 8—still a dramatic dip from 44 in the 1967 election.

Another way of expressing the distortion produced by the present system of plurality in separate constituencies is that, according to the calculations of a Swatantra spokesman, 'it took the Congress (R) 180,444 votes to get one MP elected, while it took the Swatantra Party 553,683 votes to get a seat—or more than three times as many.' Among the parties that support the proportional representation system in India are the Swatantra and the CPM, which stand at the opposing poles of the political spectrum. This is not the place to argue the different systems of representation but some remarks are called for in answer to those who project the present election return on a p.r. basis.

Obviously, elections and representative institutions built on the p.r. system are an entirely different ball game from the present system. If India adopted p.r., the parties would change, their election tactics would be different; indeed, we would have a different politics. It is not easy to guess how our politics would change under p.r. or what it might be today if we had adopted the p.r. system in 1951. One point is clear—to project the voting returns of our present elections on the p.r. basis is

illegitimate. We have obtained the present results on the basis of the representation system that now prevails; under another system something else would have happened, but no one can say truthfully what. It is entirely proper that parties or individuals should propagate another system, but not that they should cast doubt on the validity of the present results, for no factual basis exists for a valid comparison with another system.

A better index of the popularity of the Congress Party is the relative number of gains and losses of the seats held in the preceding Parliament. (Table III). We note that, among the major parties, only two gained more seats than they lost—the Congress, which gained 169 and lost 38 it already held, and the CPM, whose score was gained 19 and lost 13. But the true index of the strength and rootedness of political parties is their ability to retain the seats from one election to the next. The Indian Parliament is notorious for the high turnover of incumbents in every elections. It is only when a party is able to retain the confidence and support of the voters from election to election that it may be considered truly successful. In this calculation we must exclude pocket boroughs of the rajas or powerful landlords, where the people's loyalty is traditional and feudal rather than voluntary.

In terms of the continuity of membership, three political parties score over all the others—the Congress, the DMK and the CPI. The Congress retained well over 181 seats out of the 222 that it had in the preceding parliament, a retention rate of 80%, which is unprecedented in Indian politics. The DMK's score is also of the same order, bespeaking its organic link with the Tamil electorate. However, the CPI's retention of 14 seats out of 24, although lagging far behind the other two, is much better than other parties, including the CPM. Although the CPM suffered from the vicissitudes of electoral alliances that worked this time against it in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, but for it in West Bengal, this should not detract from the showing made by the CPI. It is too early to say that the people of India have come to move on the same wave length as the Congress or the other two parties, yet the election does mark a trend in that direction.

An interesting feature of the election was the drop in voter participation (Table IV). It occurred in all States, with a few exceptions. In Delhi, the vote for the Lok Sabha election rose from 56.3% of the total electorate in 1967 to 65.1% in 1971. Similarly, Jammu and Kashmir voting figures showed a rise from 53.2% to 57.3% in the same period and in Orissa from 41.2% to 43.2%. With these exceptions, voter participation declined in all States. The heaviest decline occurred in Mysore and Punjab.

in Mysore the drop was a steep 11%—plummeting from 66% in 1967 to the 1971 figure of 55%; and Punjab, where the vote slumped from 69.1% in 1967 to 58.8% in 1971—a decline of 10.3%. Kerala registered a decline of 8.12%.

Some guesses have been hazarded about the causes of the decline. The most frequently cited reason is that the delinking of the elections to the State Assemblies from the Lok Sabha election reduced voter interest. There is some evidence for it: participation in the Orissa election increased from 41.2% to 43% in 1967 and 1971 respectively. Similarly, the decline of voting in West Bengal, where assembly elections took place simultaneously with the parliamentary as in Orissa, the decline was marginal—a mere 0.61%. However, the third State where the two elections took place simultaneously, namely Tamil Nadu, saw a decline in voter participation of 2.58%. Thus, this explanation is not entirely satisfactory, for the increase in voter participation in Orissa may be explained by its position at the very bottom of active political consciousness. Political participation in the Orissa elections is so low that a high-powered commission, presided over preferably by a retired Supreme Court judge, should be appointed immediately to investigate the causes.

While waiting for the authoritative pronouncements of the suggested commission of inquiry, and in the absence of the Election Commissioner's inevitable comments, we may put forward two hypotheses for the rise and decline of voter participation. Between 1952 and 1967 there was a steady rise in the percentage of votes cast—growing from 45.7% in 1952 to 46.6%, 51.48% and 58.7% in 1957, 1962 and 1967 respectively. There were some ups and downs in the various States but, generally, there was an upward trend. This may be explained by the rise in political consciousness and the growing realisation of the importance of elections. However, recognition of the limits of the usefulness and effectiveness of elections and parliamentary institutions produces a decline after 1967.

There is another factor at play—the keenness of the electoral struggle. Where there is a real chance for an upturn in power, there will be a higher turnout. But this chance for the upset is as it should be perceived by the electorate, not by the newspapermen or other commentators. In 1967 a political upset was a real possibility and not a fake manufactured by the press. Among the States, Tamil Nadu witnessed a dramatic overturn when the DMK catapulted into power. Kerala and West Bengal were two other States where this happened. In the Assembly elections held in 1971, however, a genuine uncertainty prevailed only in West

Bengal, which recorded a vote almost as high as in 1967. Tamil Nadu presented a different picture to the electorate than to the political leaders or journalists. Nevertheless, the total poll of 71.82% in 1971 recorded in Tamil Nadu was the highest of any State.

When all is said and done, voter abstention in 1971 requires study and understanding. Were the abstainers individuals whose heart conflicted with their head—the heart identifying itself with conservatism but the head saying that only Mrs. Gandhi could establish a stable government? Or was it the other way around? In particular, we should investigate the continuing political backwardness of Orissa and Bihar, which have polled less than 50% of the votes in all the Lok Sabha elections, and M.P. and U.P., which exceeded 50% only once, i.e. in 1967. The Hindi-speaking complex of Bihar, U.P. and Madhya Pradesh, which elects one-third of all Lok Sabha members and dominates national politics, remains the most backward part of India, depressing national politics.

Figures of votes polled by the different parties, or the proportion of the seats won by them in the Lok Sabha show a return to the usual pattern of Indian politics. The Congress Party has again won over two-thirds of the Lok Sabha seats and 40%-plus of the votes. One-party dominance has returned to the Centre and is likely to return to the States as well. Beneath the surface of the obvious figures, however, there are question marks that cannot be answered without a much more thorough analysis than is possible here; some of these questions can only be answered by analysing the political attitudes of the individual MPs who have been elected.

For, the question remains as to what the election figures tell us about the deeper trends of opinion in the electorate? Have the Right-wing parties lost support and, if so, to what extent? On the surface, the Right-wing vote has grown because of the addition of another conservative party this time, namely, the organisation Congress. Its 10.73% votes boost the total Right-wing vote (including Jana Sangh and Swatantra) to 21.24% this time against 18.09% for the two latter parties in 1967. Contrariwise, the distinctively Left-wing poll, comprising the SSP, PSP, CPI and CPM shrank from 17.38% in 1967 to 13.28% this year. The votes cast for the two communist parties registered a marginal increase from 9.40% of the total poll in 1967 to 9.81% this year. This increase was brought about by the higher poll of the CPM in the present election but, as pointed out earlier, it is due to the larger number of candidates set up by the party.

However, the question is not the number of votes polled by the smaller parties but the

qualitative shift in the political orientation of Congress candidates elected; this is something that a statistical analysis cannot elucidate. Similarly, news of the radicalisation of the electorate and the promise or threat of 'Fire Next Time'—revolutionary mass outbreaks if the present parliament does not deliver the goods—are matters for further empirical research. It is in these qualitative but politically meaningful respects, rather than in the statistical analysis of the returns, that the true meaning of the elections is to be read. Here we are in the dark at present and the apparent return to political normalcy may prove deceptive.

However, we cannot conclude this exercise in statistical inferences of the election returns without pointing to the absence of a central

data storage and data processing facility for the figures of the elections held in India. Although the quantitative approach to the analysis of election results is likely to mislead, as election forecasters discovered to their cost, election results remain a major source of information about Indian politics. What is needed is a central computerised data bank of election results—State and national but, if possible, also local level elections. A good code book would enable all relevant questions to be answered promptly and accurately so far as statistics are concerned. Programmes are available or they may be prepared to enable the investigator to undertake a thorough statistical exploration of the election results. Rough calculations and haphazard guess work may be reduced and tendentious interpretations of the election countered.

TABLE I

Comparative Poll performance of 8 All-India Parties						
Party		Year	Contestants	Seats Won	Valid Votes polled	Percentage
Congress (R)	..	1971	439	350	62,789,348	43.06
United Congress	..	1967	521	279	59,402,754	40.73
Congress (O)	..	1971	238	16	15,285,277	10.73
Jana Sangh	..	1971	156	22	10,769,810	7.39
		1967	251	35	13,715,931	9.41
Swatantra	..	1971	59	8	4,549,850	3.12
		1967	179	44	12,659,540	8.68
SSP	..	1971	91	3	3,554,915	2.44
		1967	122	23	7,171,627	4.92
PSP	..	1971	65	2	1,499,325	1.03
		1967	109	13	4,456,487	3.06
CPI	..	1971	86	23	6,903,969	4.73
		1967	110	23	7,564,180	5.19
CPI (M)	..	1971	85	25	7,410,573	5.08
		1967	58	19	6,140,738	4.21
Others* Independents	..	1971	1,545	66	33,069,284	22.67
		1967	1,024	79	34,753,253	23.80
		1971	2,764	515	145,832,351	
		1967	2,364	515	145,866,510	

\*Others' category includes the DMK and the Telengana Praja Samiti which respectively won 23 and ten seats. The DMK had put up 24 candidates in Tamil Nadu and polled 5,622,758 votes representing 33.94 per cent in the state. The Telengana Praja Samiti contesting on a separatist plank had put up 14 nominees in Andhra Pradesh and polled 1,873,589 votes, the percentage being 14.73.

TABLE II

Names of the major parties	Number of seats won in 1971	As percentage of total seats	Percentage of the votes polled	Number of seats which the parties would have won on proportional representation
Congress (I)	350	67.96	43.06	222
Congress (O)	16	3.10	10.48	54
Jana Sangh	22	4.27	7.39	38
Swatantra	8	1.55	3.12	16
S.S.P.	3	0.58	2.44	13
P.S.P.	2	0.38	1.03	5
C.P.I.	23	4.46	4.73	24
C.P.M.	25	4.85	5.08	26
Other parties & Independents	66	12.81	22.67	117
	515			515

TABLE III

Gains and Losses of Different Parties in Lok Sabha Election						
		Seats contested	Seats Won	Gain	Loss	Retained
Congress (R)	..	442	350	169	38	181
Congress (O)	..	239	16	7	55	9
Jana Sangh	..	154	22	12	23	10
Swatantra	..	58	8	1	27	7
SSP	..	93	3	2	17	1
CPI	..	86	23	9	10	14
CPI (M)	..	86	25	10	13	6
PSP	..	63	2	..	11	2
DMK	..	24	22	2	5	20
TPS	..	14	10	10	..	..
B.K.D	..	97	1	..	9	1
RSP	..	8	3	1	..	2
Akali Dal	..	15	1	1	3	..
Muslim League	..	10	4	2	1	1
K. Cong.	..	3	3	3	..	..
Others	..	274	8	5	1	3
Independents	..	1,118	13	7	37	6
Total:	..	2,784	514	250	250	264

TABLE IV

Voter Participation in Lok Sabha Elections, 1952-1971			
States		1971	1967
Andhra Pradesh	..	59.4	66.0
Assam	..	50.37	56.1
Bihar	..	48.83	49.3
Gujarat	..	55.6	60.8
Haryana	..	64.3	69.6
Jammu & Kashmir	..	57.53	53.2
Kerala	..	64.68	72.8
Madhya Pradesh	..	48.03	50.4
Madras	..	71.82	74.4
Maharashtra	..	59.90	61.1
Mysore	..	55.0	66.0
Orissa	..	43.2	41.2
Punjab	..	58.8	69.1
Rajasthan	..	54.04	55.8
Uttar Pradesh	..	46.15	51.8
West Bengal	..	63.29	63.9
Union Territories			
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	..	70.05	78.2
Chandigarh	..	63.02	64.5
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	..	69.6	71.9
Delhi	..	65.1	56.3
Goa, Daman & Diu	..	50.6	66.4
Himachal Pradesh	..	43.0	49.1
Laccadive, Minicoy & Amindivi Islands	..	—	81.4
Manipur	..	48.8	65.2
Pondicherry	..	70.0	73.3
Tripura	..	59.9	72.9
India	..	53.47	58.70



# Watershed

SURINDAR SURJ

EVEN though the parties used socialist clichés to put forward their programmes, the election deeply polarised the political field of forces. To the conservatives, it was a battle for survival. So they forged the Grand Alliance; a record number of big businessmen entered the election arena. Large business houses such as Birlas and Tatas were involved more directly than ever before, wedding the economic vested interests to the proponents of social and cultural reaction. The conservative press was in full cry. They knew what was at issue—for the tide of history has turned against conservatives but they made desperate efforts to stem the tide. They have lost the battle but not yet the war.

The truly important change revealed by the election is in the political consciousness of the masses, even though it has not percolated to the higher levels of decision-making in the government. But reports from the rural areas are that tenants are beginning to assert their rights and the lower castes resist repression and

exploitation. Similarly, the lower middle class is restive at the growing disparities in income and engineers and scientists are close to despair at the government's failure to remove the dead hand of foreign industrial domination.

The election results reflect only partly what is going on at the grass roots level in Indian society and political leaders generally are playing a secondary and hesitant part. The owners of vested interests, such as landlords, big businessmen, high bureaucrats do seem to be aware of the danger threatening them, but the parliamentary system of government provides many ways to dilute or defeat change. But the struggle of the people against the vested interests is the root issue in the political polarisation. The election has made evident the side on which the majority of the voters assembled.

Mrs. Gandhi made herself the embodiment of the forces of progress in the villages and towns. *Gharibi hatao* was the rallying cry for it expressing the aspira-

tions of the landless labourer, the poor, tenant, the small store keeper, middle class employee, the frustrated scientist. It promised an end to the domination of vested interests—big business, bureaucrats or the rural aristocracy. A direct link of communication was established through the slogan *gharibi hatao* between Mrs. Gandhi and the common people. Intermediaries, such as local political bosses or traditional influentials, were bypassed. Indian politics will not be the same again.

Superficially, India returned to the main track with the 1971 elections: the national political pattern was restored to its pre-1964 configuration under Nehru's leadership. However, it was a major achievement for the Congress Party to recapture the two-thirds majority, for never had there been such a concentration of money, propaganda or organisational effort mobilised against it. Tycoons and Maharajas entered the lists against the Congress candidates. Moreover, opposition parties were in power in several States. It would not be wrong to say that the Congress fought the election with its back to the wall.

Observers who have studied the election remarked that the Congress Party organisation in many States was a mere joke. In Mysore, for example, there were scores of polling booths where there was no Congress volunteer present at all, whereas the Syndicate did not lack volunteers, vehicles or funds. Apparently everyone was against Mrs Gandhi except the people. But their's was a calculated response to a rational appeal. No other party was capable of providing a stable government. This consideration undoubtedly played a large role in the decisions of the voters. A small businessman in Poona, whom the author met on the eve of the election, declared his resolve to vote for the Jana Sangh. When he was asked whether the Jana Sangh could provide a stable government at the Centre, the businessman pondered for a while and stated that, after all, he would vote for the Congress Party. Many such decisions must have been

made when the voters entered the polling booths.

The people of India do not desire the political disintegration of the country, they do not want a shaky government, and their response to coalition governments is based on the accomplishments of the various fronts, SVDs etc. The SVDs have failed to deliver the goods and the vote is against them. Quite apart from the ideology of the Grand Alliance, which was rejected by the electorate as reactionary, the major consideration was that multi-party alliances, however massive, would remain fragile. If the Congress Party has received a mandate much larger than it anticipated or needed, the blame rests squarely with the opposition parties, whose leaders failed to forge a viable alternative. Lohia's anti-Congressism made sense. It was to be a genuine national front, comprising the entire spectrum of political programmes. But anti-Congressism died with Lohia and was buried after the split in the Congress Party.

Where the 1967 election provided the occasion for the expression of popular dissatisfaction with the Congress, thus redounding to the advantage of the opposition parties, in the 1971 election the voters vented disillusion with the opposition parties to the benefit of the Congress. This is a momentous event, for the 1967 elections had created an opportunity for a political alternative: there was a real likelihood that an alternative government would be available not only in the States but at the Centre. But the opposition parties wasted away the great opportunity, whereas the Congress at least partly rehabilitated itself after the split.

The return of the mandate of the electorate to the Congress Party is not a happy development for a parliamentary government for it means the reaffirmation of one-party rule. Congress rule from 1952 to 1964—during the Nehru period after the first election—had the marks of an autocracy. Nehru's power was

unchallenged, and neither he nor the government was motivated truly to undertake any radical measures. For instance, a survey of the views of members of Parliament undertaken by the author in 1962 showed that a majority was in favour of bank nationalisation. M.P.s supporting bank nationalisation were not committed 'leftists' in ideological terms. Most of them were 'conservatives', but they argued from practical experience that credit could be made available to the common people on any reasonable terms only by nationalised banking. But nobody took heed of this strong current of opinion in the Parliament, and only the fortuitous circumstance of a struggle for power in the Congress leadership provoked the government to nationalise the banks which should have been done many years earlier. But Nehru was under no compulsion to take such steps and he did not. After the 1971 election, Mrs. Gandhi is under no political necessity to undertake radical measures or to follow them up systematically in order to make them productive of benefits to the people.

Today the people in India are ready for decisive strides forward, including nationalisation of the entire big business, nationalisation of entrepreneurship, popular control and ownership of mass media, radical programmes for full employment by a programme of development based on labour power. But there is no necessity for the government to undertake these measures. There is much talk of the backlash that would hit the Congress Party if it failed to fulfill its election promises. But this is wishful thinking. The next elections are five years away, and the danger of the backlash is hidden in the mists of time. Alibis are always available; the fertile imagination of the Indian intellectuals will not fail to fashion plausible excuses. Chavan's budget, and Subramaniam's approach to planning indicate that the massive mandate is being interpreted as support for the *status quo* of verbal radicalism in economic and social policy. Left to

itself, the Congress leadership will not undertake any of the radical measures that India requires.

However, the other side of the picture is that at present there is no alternative to Congress rule in the States or at the Centre. Thus, whatever good or evil has to come will come from the party. Therefore, activation and radicalisation of the Congress are the primary political tasks. Opposition parties have a role to play, but their attempts to weaken the Congress Party, or to reduce it to a minority, will not succeed. The reason is that the opposition parties received their chance but failed the test. The Indian electorate had the good sense to return the Congress to power so that a stable government might exist. The Congress itself had the political sense to promise a radical programme. But a new compact between the electorate and the Congress Party has been concluded, and it will last another decade.

The argument is advanced by the SSP and accepted by the CPM, that the weakening of the Congress Party's power constitutes by itself a revolutionary development. To them it does not matter who diminishes the Congress Party's power—be it the Jana Sangh, the Syndicate or the Swatantra. Whosoever erodes the Congress Party's strength at the Centre or in the Centre serves the cause of revolution in India. But the argument does not appeal to the people of India. The verdict of the 1971 election means that the people will not withdraw their mandate from the Congress Party unless they see a viable and convincing alternative. They will not act on the faith that the defeat of the Congress Party would lead not to chaos but somehow a revolutionary alternative would emerge. Another way of describing the situation is that in India there is no revolutionary situation, aptly compared by Mao Tse-Tung to a field which is so dry that even a single match would start an unquenchable conflagration. The opposition must

forge a convincing alternative to the Congress Party or it has to work upon and through the Congress Party. Otherwise it will be condemned to futility. Dr Lohia's political strategy of anti-Congressism was practicable in 1967 but today's conditions require rethinking.

It was a race. The opposition parties had to capture power before the elections were called; Mrs. Gandhi, on the other hand, was hampered by the lack of party organisation in most States. She had to build up the organisation before the calling of the election. In the absence of an efficient organisation, the election involved risks. Opposition parties controlled some of the most populous States and were able to use government machinery and influence against Mrs. Gandhi. Most important, big business and almost the entire national press was lined up against her.

Opposition parties had built up the specious argument that not only was Mrs. Gandhi's Government supported by communists but it was deeply influenced by the Soviet Union. In short, it was not only Leftist and radical but anti-national. There was some talk in army messes of the need to install a conservative national government. This could be done only before the elections were held, for these would in all probability provide her with a solid majority in Parliament and make her overthrow all but the impossible. Mrs. Gandhi held two strong cards: she enjoyed mass support, so the topplers had to be careful. If they played their cards wrong, or gave the impression of pulling a fast one against her, there was sure to be a mass upsurge against them, with incalculable consequences.

Her other strong card lay in the political initiative that she held: she could get the President to dissolve the Lok Sabha and call for elections at a time of her choosing. Although her party lacked an efficient organisation, it had a large number of dedicated supporters all over the country. Contrary to the propaganda of her

opponents, a great many intellectuals, scientists, youth leaders and the bulk of the common people regarded her as the representative of India's independent nationhood and her opponents as the collaborators of foreign interests. But the Congress Party and the opposition groups were like two guerrilla armies, manoeuvring slyly to outflank the other.

With the fall of the Congress ministry in Bihar in December 1970 and the installation of the SVD government there, the opposition parties edged closer to generating the 'trend' that would lead to the fall of Mrs. Gandhi's ministry at the Centre. We have to remember that the forces aligned against her were influential and vocal. They ranged from the Supreme Court, elements in the armed forces, the bureaucracy, the whole gamut of big business, and the strident press. Among the political parties, the C.P.M. and B.K.D. had turned against the Congress. Thus, a *coup de plume* against the government could have been covered up by the mass media. In fact, it might have been presented as the last minute rescue of freedom and democracy in India. This is by no means a fanciful picture: stranger things have happened elsewhere and, may one add, the eventuality of a *coup* in India has not disappeared, even though it is likely to be defeated.

One scenario for the political coup was that Mrs. Gandhi would act rashly when the Supreme Court handed down its verdict striking down the Presidential Order derecognising the princes. A rash act on her part could provide the signal for some movement against her—a great propaganda build-up by the press, statements by the leading constitutional experts condemning the Government, popular demonstrations. As the forcing of the government's hand by the opposition parties during the political crisis in U.P. had shown, even the President was not held to be beyond the pressure tactics of the parties. But Mrs. Gandhi reacted coolly to the Supreme Court judgment on

the derecognition of the princes case. She made preparations and reacted swiftly when the Congress ministry in Bihar was toppled. Once the Parliament was dissolved, the opposition political parties were thrown on the defensive.

In sum, the political danger to the union government came via the States. The lesson for Indian federalism is that if the States are ruled by parties hostile to the union government, the latter cannot be stable. One road to power at the Centre leads through the State capitals. The other side of the equation is that a State government hostile to the Centre will not survive. Tension is necessary between State and central governments, but within limits. Outside of these limits, one or the other must go. No individual State can bring about the fall of the union government, but a number of State governments, following a coordinated strategy, may do so.

A central government cannot survive if it is surrounded by hostile State governments. The only means of survival available to Mrs. Gandhi, in the absence of strong party organisation in the States, was to strengthen her power at the Centre. This is what she accomplished by calling the mid-term election. Once she built up a powerful majority at the Centre, it had its impact on the States and opposition strongholds began to melt. Mysore, U.P., Bihar, Gujarat, all fell away from the grip of the opposition political parties.

This does not mean that Mrs. Gandhi is concerned directly about the composition of State governments. Developments after (as indeed before) the election show that her area of interest is national politics; she is interested in State politics mainly because it influences her grasp on the Centre. In the States her main concern is stability, and she and her close collaborators are willing to support, or at least tolerate, any leader who would ensure stability, provided of course he does not threaten her power. Thus, there has been little action or man-

oeuvre against the Swatantra-Utkal Congress government in Orissa, even though it pursues openly anti-socialist policies. States will, by and large, be left to fend for themselves. Factions there will be permitted to fight it out. This was the attitude of Nehru; it has been accepted by Mrs. Gandhi.

Political parties, or political leaders, whose ambition is confined to State politics, do not come in Mrs. Gandhi's way even if they belong to parties that oppose her. Thus, P. K. Singh-Deo's Swatantra-led government in Orissa did not bother Mrs. Gandhi for, wisely for himself, Singh-Deo did not dabble in national politics. He confined his ambitions to the State and the Centre has left him alone. Similarly, D.M.K. and Akali governments are strictly State-level movements and do not threaten Mrs. Gandhi's hold on the Centre. A *modus vivendi* is possible between the two. In fact a national leader may prefer to have other parties form some State governments, because it would save him the headache of having to concern himself with, and intervene in, State politics.

However, there are parties with national ambitions and programmes, such as the C.P.M. Their hold on a State government becomes a lever for intervention in national politics. Hence a conflict between a C.P.M. led government in the State and the union government becomes inevitable. From the experience of central intervention, the C.P.M. has drawn the conclusion that the power of the union government must be reduced and the State should obtain greater autonomy. However, the expectation of the C.P.M. that D.M.K. would support it in this campaign is mistaken, for the goals of the D.M.K. are strictly regional and it is willing, indeed eager, to live in a symbiotic relationship with the Centre, whereas the C.P.M. is not.

The results of the 1971 poll provide a basis for formulating the programme of action on which an alternative political policy may be

formulated. In other words, the election results enable us to read the minds and wishes of the people, of what they want and what they do not, and what are their priorities. Above all, the people want a strong and stable government. The politics of instability, or attempts to disrupt orderly social life, will not win enough popular support to make it a practical policy. Tactics of disruption in which the S.S.P. excels have been rejected decisively. The people will obviously sacrifice much in order to have stability. I believe that an objective reading of the election results justifies this conclusion.

But, stability does not mean standing still. Indeed, the potentially revolutionary significance of the election is that the party, and its leadership, entrusted with the task of maintaining political stability was committed to a radical programme. In short, stability was accepted on the terms of the Congress leadership. For comparison we may turn to President Roosevelt's victory in 1936, when he was re-elected with an overwhelming mandate to bring order into the U.S. economy in accord with his radical programme. Mrs. Gandhi was supported by many small and medium businessmen, in spite of their opposition to her economic programme because only she could form a stable government. When there is a choice between losing one's wealth and losing one's life for lack of political order, everyone prefers to lose one's wealth. In the election this was the choice made by many voters. To those who were poor, however, the choice was double positive: they could buy security and economic benefit with the same vote.

Such is the magic ink by which Mrs. Gandhi won the massive mandate. Congress leaders know that not only were the poor people behind her because their hopes were aroused, but many of the well-to-do because she provided the only chance for security and order. If the Congress leadership is capable of drawing the full lesson from the election it

should know that Congress has won the mandate for the radical overhaul of India's economy and social structure. The point is that the need for stability can produce revolutionary results; contrariwise, those who pursue the politics of instability may be counter-revolutionary in fact even though subjectively they are on the side of the avenging angels. In India stability can be provided only by a party offering a radical programme.

In addition, the 1971 mandate is for a strong centre. Decentralisation of power to the States is not incompatible with greater centralisation: in their respective spheres the two may grow and mutually reinforce each other. But obviously there are regions of India where dissatisfaction with national policy and developments is strong. Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are two of these areas; each has special problems of its own. Despite this, the election delivered a massive vote for the unity of India. This is shown not merely in the defeat of sectarian groups and parties, or in the success of candidates who were committed to the unity of the country but in the uniformity of the voting pattern throughout the country. India is united politically because it voted in a consistent manner in all parts of the land. The uniformity of the voting pattern was spontaneous. The trend to the Left of Centre was marked everywhere. In terms of party preferences, the swing in favour of the Congress Party was as marked in Panjab as it was in Kerala, it was as sweeping in Maharashtra as in Assam. Where the party started with a severe handicap, as in West Bengal, the swing in its favour is not the less marked for its failure to win a majority of seats in the Assembly or in elections to Parliament. It appears likely that fresh elections to the West Bengal Assembly will be held in February or March 1972, and an alliance of the Congress, C.P.I. and like-minded parties will win a majority.

The unity of India lies not in the clichés of the Republic Day speeches but in the acts of the

citizens, expressing their deep seated commitment to working together as citizens of India. Contentious and divisive in their arguments or religious beliefs, they act in unison as voters, thereby affirming the unifying role of the political institutions. The election has articulated a striking nationwide political agreement.

The programmatic content of the national agreement speaks for the aspirations of the common people. It is a Left-radical consensus. A determination is stirring the masses that the lowliest of them must enjoy mutual self-respect and equality with the richest and the mightiest. Mrs. Gandhi was sensitive to the stirring in the depths of the Indian society and she reaped the prize of the massive mandate. This appeal explains the unusual happening in which caste or factional divisions in the rural areas were transcended in the surge of support to the Congress Party. Nijalingappa was considered the very embodiment of the Lingayat political consciousness, and Lingayats are the dominant community in Mysore. Yet his party was wiped out. Caste and communal appeals are by no means dead, but any party planning its future course of action would do well not to calculate on caste or communal loyalties to win political victory. Similarly, it must make its Leftist radicalism clear and credible.

A fusion of caste or other conventional groupings in the surge of political support to Mrs. Gandhi was responsible for the massive majorities that Congress candidates won in many parts of the country. Such a fusion of divergent social groups is responsible for the outpouring of energy that appears at crucial turning points in the history of societies, e.g., at the time of national revolutions, or struggles for national liberation. There is then a deep sense of elation, a large part of the society feels highly inspired, and no task nor challenge seems beyond the power or capacity of the people to achieve: 'today we are nothing, tomorrow we'll be everything,'

as the people sang during the French Revolution. The social psychology of this fusion is so important at this juncture of Indian history that some words about it will not be out of place.

Normally, different social groups are bound together in relations of rivalry or antagonism. They encroach upon one another in their search for material resources, there is economic exploitation of the weak by the powerful groups, and some gain social prestige or psychological security at the cost of the others. But at the crucial turning points in history the weaker and exploited groups, in overthrowing the domination of the higher groups experience a sense of liberation. The weaker strata are usually divided and fragmented among themselves because they are at the mercy of the upper classes and cannot forge any common plan of action. At the moment of liberation the fragmented groups come together and experience reunion. Their mutual divisions are transformed into bonds of unity. The disappearance of jealousies, rivalry, division, and the growth of the appearance of comradeship produce a great sense of elation and the outpouring of energy. Many members of the upper social strata who do not accept the exploitation of the poor and weak also experience the change as the disappearance of the immoral situation in which they lived; thus they too share the feeling of liberation.

What we witnessed in the 1971 election was the first glimmer of a situation of national liberation. But we know now that it can take place in India, this outpouring of social energy, so long dammed-up under repression and constraint. Tasks considered impossible or so tortuous as to require generations for their accomplishment can be mastered in a matter of months and years. India is capable of producing a social revolution. The role of leadership is crucial; hence the need for the leading groups to prepare themselves. A revolution which is misled can be vile and destructive, as was the Nazi

revolution in Germany in the thirties and forties. That India is ripening to a social revolution presents both opportunity and danger—the danger is of its being betrayed or misled. But those who seek to lead the revolution, whether in the Congress Party or in the opposition, have to understand its dynamic and attune themselves to its rhythm.

Finally, the election posed a great challenge to political leadership. The difference between Nehru and Indira Gandhi is that Nehru presided over the birth of free India. He was already there at the start, so he was not the product of the new India. His role was parental. Indira Gandhi, on the other hand, is a post-independence product. She has been made by the people. During the Congress Party crisis in 1969 the people stood by her against the conservative leadership. However, there are different styles of leadership and indications are that Mrs. Gandhi tends to adopt the Nehru style, even though it is inapt both in terms of her relationship to the people and in the situation as it is developing in India.

**B**asically, leadership may be reactionary, conservative or creative. Reactionary leadership is focussed primarily on preventing the successful functioning of the society: it is disruptive; thereby it keeps the social organism at the lowest possible level of performance. Such is feudal leadership. The conservative leaders shun playing a creative role but let the social organism go its own way. Their intervention is minimal. Indian leaders, including Gandhi and Nehru, adopted this style of leadership from the British tradition. However, the age of conservative leadership—embodied in the ideal of the night watchman State—is finished all over the world. Yet, Indian leaders are still committed to it. The world has entered an age of human history where creative leadership is required. It is the leadership which raises society to a qualitatively higher level of performance than the society

would achieve otherwise. It is leadership that produces a qualitative jump, for the one element that the social history of the recent years makes clear is that a significant qualitative rise in the life of a society is not possible without a dedicated, creative leadership. Basically, however, the Indian political leaders continue to see the choice before them as that between autocratic leadership or conservative styles of leadership, which are the two sides of the same coin.

**B**etween these two styles of leadership, Indian political leaders seem to prefer the passive, conservative manner, in the mistaken belief that it is democratic. However, if provoked, they threaten to revert to the autocratic style. It is all the more essential to discuss the different styles and particularly to adumbrate creative leadership. Although this is not the place for the discussion, it may be noted that the election revealed the people's preference for this style but also its desperate shortage in our country. In the election we also witnessed the 'fusion' of social groups that, in the past, remained apathetic or hostile to one another. Such social fusion generates vast measures of energy which, to those who do not or will not understand it, may smack of divine intervention, or charisma, or sheer deception. But to those who grasp the dynamic of historical change, the energy generated by social fusion is what enables new nations to be forged and new eras to begin. Creative leadership plays a catalytic role in this historic change.

Analyses of the election in conventional political terms miss the mark. Usual categories do not apply. Some time in the distant future we'll be able to place the events of the past few years, of which the election is the temporary culmination, in perspective. But new categories will have to be found to understand and explain it. For the time being, we may say that something momentous has happened, but our analyses are fumbling and inadequate.

# Secularisation

IMTIAZ AHMAD

A FOREIGN political scientist recently suggested that the sweeping success of the ruling Congress in the recent Lok Sabha elections was caused by the solid support of the minority communities, especially the Scheduled Castes and the Muslims. 'It is a rather unfortunate development in Indian political life,' he added, 'that the majority and the minority communities have become polarised against one another.' It is, no doubt, true that the Scheduled Castes and the Muslims voted for the ruling Congress candidates in substantial numbers, but this way of putting the fact tends to disguise the dynamics of minority political behaviour and the somewhat varied voting trends which crystallised among the minorities in the recent elections. I should like in this article to discuss the patterns of voting among the Muslims, placing the subject within the framework of the broader question of political secularisation in India. I shall base my discussion on an analysis of the electoral statistics and study of minority strategies in electoral politics currently underway in the country.<sup>1</sup>

Before discussing the implications of the recent polls on the

process of political secularisation, it will be useful briefly to sketch out the historical background to Muslim voting behaviour over the last two decades. Such a sketch will not only place the recent elections in proper historical perspective; it will also serve to highlight some of the underlying continuities in the political changes which have been taking place in the country since the introduction of representative political institutions. Political analysts in the country, as well as abroad, have been far too much concerned with the persistence of traditional behaviour patterns and institutional structures in our political life. The ability of the electoral process itself to promote changes in political behaviour has been less readily recognised.

By examining the Muslim voting behaviour as reflected in the recent elections within the context of earlier general elections, we can see how the electoral process has been influencing traditional political solidarities, values and behaviour of the community over the years. I shall argue that the first general election strengthened the trend toward political secularisation more strongly than is commonly recognised.

It is well-known that Muslim political behaviour before inde-

<sup>1</sup> This study has been financed by a grant from the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

pendence rested on a theory that the community constituted a viable unit of political mobilisation. It is not possible here to enter into any detailed discussion of the reasons which facilitated the articulation of the entire Muslim community, or at least a very large segment of it, as a cohesive political group. Elsewhere I have discussed these reasons in somewhat greater detail.<sup>2</sup> It is sufficient for our present purpose to note that certain social and cultural processes had promoted the consolidation of the Muslims into a single cultural community, and the emergence of a politics presided over by the British reinforced and accentuated that consolidation.

The principal characteristic of that consolidation was that the Muslims came to believe they shared certain common social, political, and economic interests as a community, and their internal differentiation based on social and economic class positions was irrelevant to their cohesive mobilisation in the political sphere. The overwhelming support of large sections of the Muslim masses in most parts of India for the creation of a separate 'homeland' for Muslims was a natural consequence of this belief.

The creation of Pakistan and the subsequent developments on both sides belied the objective sociological validity of this belief. It showed that possession of a common religious culture was less significant and relevant for any group to constitute a political community; a political community consisted mainly of people who were joined together by common social problems and real economic interests within a wider polity. The negation of their belief that they shared com-

mon interests as a community naturally resulted in some agonising soul-searching among the Muslims. Led by the so-called 'nationalist' Muslims, on the whole an obscurantist and conservative lot, the majority of the Muslims fell behind the Congress Party.

The results of the first three general elections offer adequate evidence of the extent of Muslim support for the Congress. Perhaps the most direct evidence is the party affiliations of Muslim candidates and Muslims elected to the Lok Sabha. Table I shows the party-wise break up of the Muslim candidates who contested and the number of Muslims elected in all the Lok Sabha Elections.

It is seen from this table that Muslim candidates contesting elections on Congress Party tickets constituted the largest proportion among the Muslim political activists. It is also seen that the Congress candidates succeeded in

getting elected in larger proportion than the candidates put up by other political parties and Independents, and the Congress candidates stood better chances of winning an election than other candidates.

Given the close link between the political activists and the electorate generally in the early stages of political socialization in a developing democracy, it is possible to postulate that the pro-Congress political orientation of the Muslim politicians was shared by the electorate. There is, however, no way of determining the party preferences of the common Muslim voters, and electoral statistics tell us little about how the Muslim masses voted during the first three general elections. Elaborate surveys of a wide cross-section of the electorate can alone throw light on this subject.

The data obtained on party preferences by our survey of

TABLE I

Party	Party-wise Break-up of Muslim Candidates and Muslims Elected									
	Muslim Candidates					Muslims Elected				
	1952	1957	1962	1967	1971	1952	1957	1962	1967	1971
Cong-R					25					22
Cong-R	18	27	27	31		17	17	17	14	
Cong-O					15					—
CPI				6	5				2	1
CPI	1	7	10			—	1	1		
CPM				1	2				1	1
Socialist	6	—	7	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
PSP	—	8	10	11	5	—	2	—	1	—
PSP	—	—	—	4	5	—	—	—	1	—
SWA	—	—	13	15	3	—	—	—	3	—
ML	—	—	4	2	7	—	—	2	2	4
MM	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—
Regional Parties	2	4	5	5	15	—	1	—	2	1
Other Parties	3	—	8	4	3	—	—	1	—	—
Inde- pendents	7	15	35	57	122	—	—	1	4	1
Total	37	61	119	137	211	18	21	22	30	30

2. See my 'The Two Nations vs. Composite Culture: a critique of two Interpretations in Recent Political History,' Paper presented at the Jawaharlal Memorial Museum Seminar on: 'The Communal Problem — 1919-1947; 'Sanskritization, Westernization and Indian Society,' to be published in the *Journal of Asian Studies*.



roughly seven hundred voters in selected parliamentary constituencies clearly shows a marked pro-Congress orientation among the Muslim voters. It shows that nearly eighty per cent of the voters interviewed consistently voted Congress in the first three general elections, while the remaining twenty per cent voted for that party at least once. Similar conclusions are suggested by the data on party preferences collected by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies.

Several reasons account for this initial attraction of the Muslims toward the Congress. For one thing, the Congress was the only political organisation which, apart from the Muslim League, had tried to establish some degree of mass contact with the Muslims during the national movement,

and it was natural for the majority of the Muslims to be attracted to it. Secondly, and more significantly perhaps, the Muslims, suspicious of their future prospects in a predominantly Hindu India and suspected of their loyalties for Pakistan, saw the Congress as a political umbrella which could offer them protection against Hindu communal forces and safeguard their political interests.

The support for the Congress increased the participation of Muslims in the political process, but it did not affect any significant change in their pre-partition political orientations. Even while supporting the Congress after independence, they continued to maintain a monolithic character and functioned in the political system as a cohesive political entity. This situation was bound to change as the different political

parties evolved sharper ideological differences, the different social and economic strata of the Muslims became increasingly differentiated, and their communal solidarity became subjected to electoral competition and manipulation by other political parties.

The fourth general election precipitated a major shift in Muslim electoral behaviour. The Muslims withdrew their support from the Congress and turned to other parties. This is clearly reflected both in the party affiliations of Muslim candidates and Muslims elected, and the data on voting behaviour in selected constituencies. Table II sets out the State-wise break up of party affiliations of Muslim candidates who contested the Lok Sabha election in 1967.

It shows that the number of Muslims elected to the Lok Sabha

TABLE II

State-wise distribution of Muslim candidates in the 1967 Lok Sabha Elections  
(Figures in brackets are of those elected)

State	Cong.	CPI	CPM	SOC	SSP	PSP	SWA	ML	RP	OP	IND	Total
Andhra Pradesh	2 ( 2 )	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6 (—)	8 ( 2 )
Assam	3 ( 1 )	..	..	..	..	1 ( 1 )	..	..	..	..	2 (—)	6 ( 2 )
Bihar	3 ( 2 )	2 (—)	..	..	1 (—)	4 (—)	2 (—)	..	..	..	5 (—)	17 ( 2 )
Haryana	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 (—)	1 —
J. & K.	4 ( 4 )	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3 ( 1 )	1 (—)	1 (—)	9 ( 5 )
Kerala	3 —	..	..	..	..	..	..	2 ( 2 )	..	..	..	5 ( 3 )
Madras	2 —	..	..	..	..	..	1 ( 1 )	..	..	..	1 ( 1 )	4 ( 2 )
M.P.	1 (—)	..	..	1 (—)	..	1 (—)	..	..	..	..	2 (—)	5 —
Maharashtra	2 ( 2 )	..	..	..	..	..	1 (—)	..	..	1 (—)	1 (—)	5 ( 2 )
Mysore	1 ( 1 )	..	..	..	..	2 (—)	1 ( 1 )	..	..	..	2 (—)	6 ( 2 )
Rajasthan	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 (—)	1 —
U.P.	7 ( 1 )	3 ( 2 )	..	..	3 ( 1 )	2 (—)	9 ( 1 )	..	..	2 (—)	19 (—)	45 ( 5 )
W. Bengal	3 ( 1 )	1 (—)	1 ( 1 )	..	..	1 (—)	1 (—)	..	2 ( 1 )	..	8 ( 1 )	17 ( 4 )
Delhi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3 (—)	3 —
Laccadive	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5 ( 1 )	5 ( 1 )
Total:	31 (14)	6 ( 2 )	1 ( 1 )	1 (—)	4 ( 1 )	11 ( 1 )	15 ( 3 )	2 ( 2 )	5 ( 2 )	4 (—)	57 ( 4 )	137 (30)

R.P.: Regional Parties.

O.P.: Other Parties.

TABLE III

Approximate percentage of Muslims in the Constituency (In Per Cent)	Seats Contested by Congress.				
	1952	1957	1962	1967	1971
Below 10	—	1	—	—	6
10 — 15	2	2	—	—	—
15 — 25	2	4	4	4	—
Above 25	3	3	2	2	2

on Congress tickets fell from 17 in 1962 to 14 in 1967, though the number of candidates nominated by the Congress rose from 27 in 1962 to 31 in 1967. There was a large increase in the number of Muslim candidates contesting the election on other party tickets, and their proportion in the Lok Sabha also increased considerably. One of the factors in this diversification was the Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat and similar other sectarian organisations.

At first glance, the results of the recent general election would seem to indicate a reversal of the trend towards the diversification of Muslim political support. As Table I indicates, the number of Muslims elected to the Lok Sabha on the Congress ticket has once again risen to its old proportion. They constitute the largest proportion among the Muslim candidates elected despite the fact that the proportion of Muslim candidates put up by other parties and Independents is eight times more than all the Congress candidates. However, these figures are likely to be extremely misleading by themselves. It is necessary to examine them in somewhat greater detail to find out their full implications.

A comparison of the electoral statistics at the district level reveals that Muslim candidates previously stood for election from constituencies having 15 per cent or more Muslims in the population. Table III shows the distribution of approximate Muslim voters in the constituencies from which Congress Muslim candidates con-

tested in previous elections in U.P.

By and large, the Congress put up Muslim candidates from constituencies which had more than 15 per cent Muslim voters. Its strategy had always been to mobilise the Muslim voters on a communal basis and to try to secure the seat through the combined strength of the Scheduled Castes and the Muslims in the constituency. It has been found that in all constituencies which had more than fifteen per cent Muslim votes, the Muslims voted en bloc and acted as a communally cohesive group.

A closer look at the electoral statistics suggests that this kind of communal concentration in favour of a particular candidate was not characteristic of the Muslim voters alone. A similar concentration obtained among the caste Hindus when a Muslim candidate was contesting the election on the ticket of an important, all-India, political party, particularly the Congress, and the majority of the Muslims were closely concentrated in favour of that particular candidate.

For instance, in a study of a rural constituency in Uttar Pradesh, it has been found that both the Hindu and the Muslim voters tended to be communal.<sup>3</sup> Both in 1957 and 1962 the Congress candidates from that constituency were locally influential Muslims. On

3. For details see my article, 'The Electoral Process in the Rudauli Assembly Constituency,' to be published in the *Economic and Political Weekly*.

both the occasions there was a clear-cut identification between the Muslims and the Congress candidates on the one hand, and the Jana Sangh candidate and caste Hindus on the other, and the constituency, having 19.5 per cent Muslim vote, returned the Jana Sangh candidate. In 1967, when there was no Muslim candidate in the field, the Muslim vote, despite the support of the Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat for an Independent candidate, was shared by the Majlis-supported Independent, the SSP and the Congress candidates.

Such polarization of communities due to local politics has been noted elsewhere. It is perhaps for this reason that most non-sectarian political parties are reluctant to develop too close an identification with the Muslims, though they would like to enjoy their support.

The Congress seems to have changed its earlier strategy of putting up Muslim candidates from constituencies having more than 15 per cent Muslim votes. Except for certain strongholds, the ruling Congress this time put up Muslim candidates from constituencies which have less than 10 per cent, often less than 5 per cent, Muslim voters in the population. This shift in the Congress strategy produced two very far-reaching results. Firstly, the Muslim votes became irrelevant to the final outcome in the election and this prevented the development of a clear identification between the Muslims and the Congress candidate. Secondly, the Muslims in constituencies having large concentrations of a Muslim population had had to make their choice between several Hindu candidates, and their choice had to be made on the merits of the issues involved rather than the religious status of the candidates.

The significance of the religious status of the candidate as a factor in electoral politics has been declining gradually. One of the reasons for this is the increase in the number of Muslim candidates who contest the election from the same constituency. Table IV presents the number of Muslim candi-

TABLE IV

Year	No. of Muslim Candidates per Constituency.			
	1	2	3	4 or more
1952	23	5	—	1
1957	43	9	—	—
1962	77	15	2	1
1967	61	21	5	4
1971	67	27	17	9

dates contesting the election from the same constituency. It shows that the number of candidates contesting the election from the same constituency has been rising steadily.

For instance, there were only five constituencies each having more than one Muslim candidate and only one constituency had more than four candidates in 1952. At the recent election, sixty-seven constituencies had one Muslim candidate each, twenty-seven constituencies had two Muslim candidates each, and seventeen had as many as three Muslim candidates contesting election from the same constituency. Nine constituencies had more than four Muslim candidates each figuring in the election. When more than one Muslim candidate runs from the same constituency, the Muslim voter cannot be guided merely by the religious status of the candidate and has to make his choice in terms of other issues.

This point is further confirmed by a look at the performance of Muslim Independents set out in Table V.

In any party-based democracy, the Independent candidate cannot

TABLE V

Performance of Muslim Independents  
in Lok Sabha Elections 1952-1971.

No. of Muslim Independents.						
Percentage of votes polled	1952	1957	1962	1967	1971	
Below 10	3	6	29	42	106	
10 — 20	2	3	3	5	8	
20 — 30	2	3	2	8	7	
Above 30	—	3	1	2	3	

be said to stand for any strict ideological position. Generally speaking, he is a local man who runs in the election in the hope that his particularistic position will secure him the support of the local voters on purely local and regional grounds. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of Muslim Independents whose only motivation to run in the election is, possibly, to secure the votes of Muslims on the basis of their religious status. Nevertheless, the percentage of votes polled by Muslim Independents offers impressive evidence that they do not enjoy much popular support among the voters.

The electoral statistics suggest that the Muslim votes in the recent election were not communally concentrated in favour either of Muslim candidates or any one particular party, sectarian or communal, but were rather split up according to several factors. For example, the Muslim votes in the Lucknow Lok Sabha constituency were divided among the ruling Congress, the BKD, and the Jana Sangh, the ruling Congress being the chief beneficiary. Similarly, in the Amroha constituency the Muslim votes were divided among the CPI, the Muslim Majlis, the PSP and the BKD-supported Independent candidate. It may be said that the CPI candidate, a Muslim, secured the larger proportion of the Muslim vote, but it is also true that the main supporters of the SSP candidate in many areas were Muslims and whole villages of Muslims voted for him.

It was only in the Chandni Chowk constituency studied recently that the Muslim vote was entirely concentrated in favour of the ruling Congress candidate. But this was so mainly because of the nature of the electoral competition. The main contest in Chandni Chowk was between the ruling Congress and the Jana Sangh and the majority of the Muslim voters did not see any other alternative except to vote for the Congress. The communal

concentration of the Muslim vote in favour of the Congress-R candidate in Chandni Chowk was thus situationally determined and cannot be said to be a primordial characteristic of the Muslim vote generally.

Politics is highly personalised in India. For one thing, it is the candidate and not the party that the electorate is called upon to elect, and this results in a number of extra-electoral factors entering into the electoral arena. Secondly, the candidate acts as the sole source of political strength and rarely builds the social base of the party. Given the facility with which a person can change his party identification, the party and the electorate have no immediate redress if he changes from one political party to another. This often results in people voting for their caste or community as they feel that a man can defect from a party but not from his caste or community. Lastly, although different sections of the population may vote for the same party or candidate, they often do so for different reasons, expressing their different interests, which may or may not conflict. The nature of our electoral system, basing the election on the candidate rather than the party obscures complementary interests and creates tensions along the lines of community and caste.

Political analysts must recognise that in a country which is characterised by glaring inequalities, appalling poverty, a highly vitiated social and political climate, wherein traditional loyalties are critical, and where the political system has encouraged the jockeying for power, caste by caste and community by community, the political secularisation of the minority communities cannot take place at a rate faster than that of the whole society. The whole society must grow and change at an even pace, and that is the only course for the successful socio-political integration of an otherwise diverse and plural society. The recent election was a step in that direction.

# Vested interests over-rated

SATISH K. ARORA

THERE are generally two fundamental ways to arrive at a reasonably valid understanding of the nature of any particular election. One approach is essentially dependent on socio-economic analysis: it attempts to correlate the way in which a person votes with the socio-economic environment which envelops him. This approach focusses upon the groups to which an individual belongs: his family, class, caste, occupation group and age cohorts. The assumption underlying such analysis is that individuals belonging to a common group tend to vote in a similar manner, either because of commonality of interest or the exertion of group influence.

A second approach to an election focusses on more psychological and attitudinal dimensions. It enquires more directly into the reasons why people vote as they do—reasons related not merely to the groups to which they belong, but to more idiosyncratic factors. It is concerned with questions of the salience of politics, issues, and

candidates; and the degree to which individuals identify with or support a political party, a leader, or simply, the system itself.

Surveys are presently being conducted on a national, as well as regional, basis to reveal such information about voting behaviour in the last general elections. Inasmuch as the presentation of the results of these surveys will take some months, we can gauge the significance of the past election only through our intuitive feelings about the contemporary political mood, combined with a reliance on the projection of results of past election studies. These projections, however, assume that all else remains constant—an assumption which can be made only with the utmost prudence, and skepticism.

On the surface, the results of the last general election appear to be an occasion for optimism—but with caution. The political consolidation of the nation under conditions of escalating concern is an achievement of impressive

dimensions; its import is significant if for no other reason than that the electorate has conclusively demonstrated its ability to exercise political choice with clarity and decisiveness. Yet, the fact is that the electorate was offered remarkably little choice in so far as alternative programmes and platforms are concerned.

**E**lections perform functions other than the selection of governors by the governed, and among these is the stimulation, in varying degrees, of both political conflict and integration. Conceived as a political conflict situation, the last general election may be interpreted as one in which the organised political oppositional alliance sought to contest the legitimacy of the incumbent Prime Minister by evoking perceived threats to the constitutional character of the republic and its established political system. The ruling Congress, deftly ignoring these areas, aggressively focussed instead upon selected policy issues that were of relevance and concern to a majority of citizens. There was little political dialogue; instead, the electoral campaign appears to have been transformed into massive exercises in persuasion and the establishment of personal credibility. In this sense, the manifest lack of political debate and confrontation cannot be said to have contributed much to political enlightenment.

This situation is of particular interest because, generally speaking, one of the functions of major political parties is their creation and projection of separate and unique images of themselves as the exclusive repositories of the national interest. A scrutiny of the manifestoes of the major political parties competing in the last elections, however, reveals that identification of areas of national concern as well as strategies for achieving value goals do not seem to have appreciably differed from party to party. Within the party structure, at least, there appears to have been a remarkable consensus regarding areas of stress and priorities. Such a consensus re-

flects a maturing and realistic assessment of the felt as well as latent needs of the Indian people. But it also provides little basis for any major party to claim a uniqueness or exclusiveness for its own platform.

The consensus on issues, moreover, should alert us to the fact that the prevailing almost neurotic concern with the divisions, variety, and diversity in Indian society in fact may be obscuring perception of an infinitely more important political reality. It is of great moment that, in so variegated a society such as ours, identification of needs can be so impressively agreed upon.

This facet of political life also points to the significance of another: namely, that Congress, despite its alleged emphasis on soliciting support from minorities, of necessity has had to structure appeals to all strata of society—in this election as in previous ones. It has frequently been suggested that Mrs Gandhi was trying to create a Rooseveltian coalition of the economically and the socially less integrated. But such an electoral strategy, even if interpreted in these terms, is less novel than appearances would have it. For, this has indeed been the classic political mobilization strategy of the Congress as movement and as party.

**T**he distinctive contribution of the Prime Minister—and this cannot be minimized—lay in her credibility, in her ability to engender acceptance of her integrity by widely differentiated and cross-cutting sectors of our people. The coalition argument also assumes that there was a majority unified in its opposition to the minorities. The deliberate cultivation of minorities, each of whom has grievances and special claims upon the nation, is indeed an appropriate strategy when one can predict that simultaneously fairly large sections of other groups will also vote for Congress—whether because of their 'inherited' political loyalties or their inertia.

It has also been argued that where a population is so highly

stratified, with so little overlapping among groups (i.e., where distribution of resources is cumulative, with those possessing one set tending still, though undoubtedly decreasingly, to possess others as well), then any party which draws support from nearly every strata proportionately—as there is indication that Congress does—cannot easily satisfy everyone. In other words, runs the argument, it is difficult to obtain a meaningful consensus from supporters whose range of interests represent so wide a spectrum.

Let us try to place this argument in some perspective: in view of the skewed distribution of resources in our society, any party wishing to obtain even a small number of seats must necessarily cut across the narrow class divisions at the top of the social pyramid, and draw support from the great majority at the base. That the Congress made special appeals to 'the poor' should scarcely be considered either surprising or particularly significant: the majority of the people in India are poor. A tradition of an escalating socialist rhetoric has been complemented by relatively low levels of governmental regulations and performance; thus, the more socially and economically powerful among Congress supporters have come to realize that they can live with this.

Turning from ideology and appeals to organization, it may be noted that in all the past general elections, Congress was the only political party with a countrywide organizational network. This asset was largely a legacy of its pre-independence stature as a national movement. It was often credited with much of the unified Congress' electoral success.

**B**efore the 1971 elections, however, because of the split within the Congress, a situation emerged in which neither Congress (O) nor Congress (R) could command control over the countrywide network of contacts and offices. Thus, if previously this network could

be conceived as the political machine which could faithfully deliver its quota of votes, this advantage was seriously impaired during the last election. The absence of an intact organization, along with the sweeping success of the Congress (R) forces us to question whether indeed the political party, with all its concomitant organizational resources, is really crucial for the winning of an election. It is now no longer possible to attribute an automatic efficacy to organized political machines; for obviously, Mrs. Gandhi's extraordinary performance was achieved despite the absence of an intact organizational apparatus, rather than because of it. Some serious consequences for the future development of the political party system would appear to arise from this.

If, then, the Congress (R) was deprived of its established organizational network, and if it had few grounds for laying unique claims for its ideology—that is, if we remove the two factors which are most commonly referred to as responsible for electoral success—then what can account for the overwhelming success of Mrs. Gandhi's party, and the failure of the others?

Probably, one of the most important reasons for the overwhelming response to Congress (R) was the fact that it was a reflection of deeply felt insecurity generated by widespread instability. This instability took many forms in many areas of the country, and it seemed to threaten not only the political order but the private realm as well. In addition, the need for a strong government was supported by the reaction to the fluid patterns of internal political relations, especially in evidence since 1967. Defections, which exhibited a steep increase during this period, were but one indication of this type of instability. There appears to have been extensive revulsion against the debasement of government, and what might be termed the commercialization of politics. Although Congress can scarcely be

said to have been immune to this, the records of other parties, in which perhaps particularly strong hopes of reform had been placed, demonstrated that little staying power or coherence could be attributed to them.

Shifting our attention from reflections on the nature of the election to some of its consequences, we find that it is becoming increasingly apparent that what cleavages were created during the electioneering period are being smoothed over by a post-election mood that largely obliterates dissension. The period which immediately follows an election is generally congenial for the successful politicians. There is a tendency for voters—even those who opposed the party returned to power—to take a benign attitude towards the elected. In this sense, elections, as such, sometimes perform an integrative function. The potential support available to the Prime Minister today is likely to be greater than the sum total of the voters who cast their ballots specifically for her.

It is also apparent that the election strategy of the Congress (R) itself contributed to the task of integration. The immediate political pay off of garnering votes of apparently disparate minorities was calculated in terms of their contribution to electoral victory. But, simultaneously, this strategy has served an even more overriding national purpose: with maximum economy of effort it inducted—even if temporarily—the potentially alienated sectors into the national mainstream. The sting of exclusion from national attention, whether real or imagined, is relieved, and a euphoric identification with the concerns of the organised national community is thereby facilitated. This important integrative role of elections is decidedly as important, if not more so, as the task of selecting the governors.

Euphoria over the outcome of the elections, however, also carries with it heavy pressure for performance and fulfilment of electoral

promises. The election platform upon which Congress (R) stood was marked by vagueness. This vagueness permitted appeals to large sectors of our society, but it also encouraged the electorate to read private preferences into public policies as yet unformulated. Performance can be judged best in the light of specified programmes and targets. If this specificity is lacking, obviously the elite's manoeuvrability is to some degree enhanced because the vagueness of their content is theirs to specify. On the other hand, it is quite likely that disillusionment and disappointment can quickly mount as demands proliferate in an uncoordinated and inorchestrated manner.

It ought to be possible (now that the levers of power are under the firm control of the Prime Minister's party), swiftly to place before the nation a specified and targeted agenda that shall be the focus of attention; achievement of this agenda can form the record on the basis of which the next general election will be largely conducted. A political party which is swept into power on a mandate that calls for the abolishing of nothing less than poverty itself obviously needs time perspectives that are synchronized with levels of governmental performance. There is some relevance in drawing attention to the meaning of this year's general elections, but more important, perhaps, is the contemplation of the design and scope of actions which can affect political survival at the next general elections.

Performance levels, moreover, will depend upon not only rational calculations and a lucid grasp over societal values upon which consensus exists; it will depend also upon the fashioning of instrumentalities that are sharp enough to translate policy choices into practice. The apparatus of the party and the bureaucracy are pre-eminently important instrumentalities, and what is done—or not done—about them will be responsible for the performance of the political system over the com-

ing years. At this point in time, the options are open for change, and clearly these will not be foreclosed in the near future. Radical innovation is as much possible as is a phased and sequenced series of transformations in both the party and the bureaucracy. One needs to ask: will the instrumentality for executing changes and promises remain constant? In other words, will the formula for action continue as before: the bureaucracy being entrusted with the chief tasks; and the party service by bringing in more technical all levels to accomplish its ends?

In fact, there are a number of courses open to the party at this juncture, and they are not mutually exclusive. One alternative is to use the bureaucracy as it is. The party continues to be subordinate to government, functioning at best as a facilitative arm. In this case its influence may increase, but its power is likely to decline. It is also open to the government—as influenced by the party—to inject the bureaucracy with technical expertise, altering the composition of the higher civil service by bringing in more technically competent men.

Another strategy is to convert Congress into a highly disciplined and organised political party to oversee the implementation of policies. This may be what Jagjivan Ram had in mind when, at the beginning of April, he suggested transforming Congress into a 'cadre party' which could spearhead changes which it legislated. The building of a cadre-led, mass-based party may, in time, increase the power of the party as the latter imposes its own sense of direction upon governmental policies and administration. While the advantages are many, it is also possible that through this process it may come into conflict with government and administration, and thus eventually lessen its influence, even as it increases its power. Finally, as another alternative, the Prime Minister may choose a group of specialized personnel to operate as a brains-trust or trouble-

shooters. Obviously, this step could potentially alter the political system as presently constituted.

It is especially necessary now to remind ourselves that the Prime Minister's political survival was in serious jeopardy for most of her period in office. Equally necessary, we need to acknowledge that the very considerable political strength that now accrues to her has been the result of calculated and delicately calibrated sets of appeals and actions designed to demonstrate seriousness of purpose and the will to translate this into meaningful policies. Perhaps the Prime Minister's greatest, and possibly unconscious contribution lies in what has amounted to a refreshing debunking of theories that have stipulated that vast and powerful lobbies of 'vested interests' can block the nation's progress toward a more equitable and just social order.

That nationalization of banks and the attempts to abolish privy purses have demonstrated the existence of latent mass appeal for such measures is important enough. But, certainly, the lack of a credible political threat from organised high finance and the princes—and their incapacity or will to organise into an effective political opposition—demonstrates that the influence and political base of those identified as 'vested interests' has been vastly overrated.

The most significant political fact of our time is surely this absence of organised interests that can effectively dictate or defv broad-based national policies. There exist today, as before, groups whose perceptions and interests may be feudal, but they are not horizontally organised enough to pose meaningful threats to national progress. It is apparent that whatever vested interests do exist, they can be neutralised, even over-run, within the existing political framework. To overestimate opposition from these quarters may well turn out to be the most cardinal error of contemporary Indian politics.

# A case study

JITENDRA SINGH

RAJASTHAN, since independence, specially since the reorganisation of the States has remained under one party rule. The Congress has been in a majority but not in a dominant majority. There have been since 1947 only four Chief Ministers. Sukhadia has been in unchallenged power since 1954. The politics of Rajasthan remains community bound. I have used 'community' instead of caste because the latter in the Rajasthan situation would not be quite the right description of the power groupings there. For instance, Jats and Rajputs are both martial races and they cannot be classified under the traditional caste categories. There is too much of a mixture in them. The same is true of the tribals.

The elections were a victory for the New Congress—but not for Sukhadia. The feudal chiefs did well but their influence is diminishing. The Jana Sangh was the most vigorous opposition group but without the support of the princes it would have just got one

seat (Kota) out of the five that it eventually got (the same pattern as in Madhya Pradesh). There is no Leftist group other than the New Congress. The base of the New Congress has changed and Indira Gandhi has emerged as the most popular national leader for Rajasthan electors. The new alignments would be within the New Congress.

The emergence of the Jats is the most evident factor in Rajasthan politics. Jats are, by and large, a pastoral martial community. They are the landholders, tenant-farmers, professional men (police and army) and in the last twenty years have moved to other professions. They are predominant in the North-East and North-West of Rajasthan. They have been in Congress since the beginning. During British rule there was a major antagonism between the Rajputs and the Jats, the former being landlords and the latter virile tenant-farmers. Many of the local Jat leaders led



rural agitations against the landlords or feudal chiefs.

Today, the Jats are more progressive and prosperous than the Rajputs. In politics, so far, in spite of their strength they have played a minor role. This has been due to many factors—the two most important being: (1) their base is limited to the North-East and North-West of Rajasthan; (2) the first generation of Jat leadership disappeared at the time of independence and the second generation is only just now emerging. A group of dynamic Jats—aware of the national issues and the formulations of local politics—a Ram Niwas Mirdha, a Nathu Ram Mirdha (a bit older) a Paras Ram Maderna, a Sumitra Singh are just coming to the fore. Of them, Ram Niwas Mirdha has already achieved national stature. He is also not community-confined.

The mid-term parliamentary poll of 1971 further strengthened their position. They achieved the defeat of all businessmen (the Birlas/the Somanis—two of them/the Tapa-dias/the Morarkas/the Patodias) as well of the splinter Jat group under the BKD. The election in these areas was fought on ideological grounds and under the banner of Indira Gandhi. They also achieved the defeat of the House of Jodhpur in the latter's own former territory, Nagaur (with a majority of over 1 lakh votes). In Bikaner district the Jat vote was splintered but through their support the Congress got the Ganganagar seat. In the North-East and North-West of Rajasthan (the Jat area) they gave a crushing defeat to the capitalists, to the feudal chiefs and to the BKD.

The Jats radicalised Rajasthan politics more than ever before and emerged—along with the scheduled castes—as the strongest supporters of Indira Gandhi. The overwhelming success of Jats in their area of influence has given rise to the emergence of a young Jat leadership which is ideological in orientation and non-antipathic to other communities. But to move forward and strive for leadership of the New Congress would require the building of fresh alliances,

ideology-wise, regionwise and community-wise.

The Rajputs, who are about equal in number to the Jats (percentage of population), are not united and have no identifiable all-Rajasthan leadership. The Maharana of Udaipur cannot win votes in Bikaner, not even in his neighbouring district, Ajmer—which he calls his 'second home'. The influence of royal personages from Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner is now getting diminished and is restricted only to limited areas. The Yuvraj of Kota got in through the Jana Sangh and Jhalawar support (he is at the moment lost and bewildered). Bharatpur as we all know went down like a house of cards (he has no sustaining interest in politics). Alwar would not enter politics (engaged in deep meditation, and his son—though a good public speaker—is too preoccupied with theological studies). Jaisalmer is in his own area a nonentity. Probably, it was the last fight of the feudal chieftains: they don't have any staying power nor concern for the welfare of their limited community (that is, the Rajputs).

The Rajputs are already and will gradually become more leaderless. They are so scattered that except in parts of Jodhpur and Jaisalmer they don't form a majority in any Assembly Constituency (while the Jats form a solid bloc right from Bharatpur, Sekhawati, Udaipurwati—in former Jaipur State—to Bikaner and N.W. and N.E. part of Jodhpur). Sukhadia, who wanted to strengthen himself through Rajput support against the growing influence of Jats said to a friend recently 'How can I help Rajputs when they are solidly behind Rajas and Maharajas,' which in his language means how could he get the support of Rajputs to counteract the growing influence of Jats when they were solidly tied to the latter. Rajputs are not that solidly tied to any one and they will get more leaderless in future. This is in a situation where the community is getting more impoverished, with little or no education and where the women still believe that they

should sit at home, move in *purdah* and do no work with their own hands for their own good (in sharp contrast to Jat women who are the backbone behind the uplift of the Jat community). An ideological leadership amongst the Rajputs (the Maharajas are few in number) needs to emerge to uplift the community.

The most heartening thing of this election was the awakening of the scheduled castes and, to a lesser but perceptible extent, of the scheduled tribes. They are the most numerous group in Rajasthan politics and they voted 80% in favour of Indira Gandhi. They also this time broke away from their traditional leaders—whom the United Congress had wooed for support in all the earlier elections. It is on this group that Indira Gandhi had the most effective influence in Rajasthan. *Garibi hatao* worked like a talisman and did the trick. An analyst or a correspondent, who had just contacted the traditional leaders, would have said that the opposition would win—assuming that the mass of scheduled castes would follow their traditional leaders. It is here that the correspondents went wrong. There was another phenomenon visible among the scheduled castes (also reflected in the behaviour of scheduled tribes, Meenas and Gujjars) that they overtly either said to both the groups that they would vote for them or remained overtly disinterested while committed to vote for the party of *garibi hatao*.

The mid-term parliamentary election has beaten all records of earlier elections in the spending of money. Sukhadia expressed this point well when he addressed a meeting of the Congress workers after the elections in these words: 'We told the capitalists: "Why are you all standing from Rajasthan where you have invested no money. You would have had a better chance of winning if you would have stood from Calcutta or Bombay where at least you have started some industries". And then added humorously 'Khair koi bat nahi. We forgive you all this, because during the

elections you did distribute hand-some money. These are small mercies and we are thankful to you for them.'

**T**he Mahajans—Baniyas (specially Oswals and Maheshwaris) so closely identified themselves with the multi-millionaires that they went solidly in favour of the opposition. They had functioned till now as the traditional leaders—specifically in rural areas and through their power to lend money. The influence of the money-lender with the rural population was broken this time. Even more than the Rajputs, the Mahajans were the most bewildered community. At a number of places one could see signs of revolt against them by the impoverished rural population for the high rates of interest they charged (50% to 70%). The rural population at a number of places—and the number is increasing—are refusing to pay back the loans and, specifically, the interest charged on loans. At places, the younger sons of Mahajans are also revolting and seeking new avenues for investing their money, and leaving their homes and moving outwards.

These Mahajans were the backbone of the Old Congress and with the demise of the Old Congress their influence—specially in rural areas—would further diminish. It is interesting that the majority of the Sarpanches in Rajasthan are from this group, and the rest divided between Rajputs and the Jats, Gujjars, Meenas etc. The Sarpanches from the scheduled castes or scheduled tribes are just minimal in number.

After the elections, the Rajasthan Government announced in the Assembly that a high powered commission would be appointed to examine the functioning of Panchayat Raj Institutions in Rajasthan. One of the important terms of reference of this Commission would be to evaluate whether the Panchayat Raj Institutions have fallen into the hands of the higher-monied-propertyed castes and, if so, whether the rapid development of

Rajasthan could be achieved through their leadership.

Two other important aspects of this election were:

- (1) the tying up of local issues with national issues—and for the first time a certain concern to debate national issues; and
- (2) the tying up of the interests of a community with a rudimentary or a sophisticated ideology.

Local issues were discussed but mostly in the context of larger national issues. For instance, two mills in Beawar are closed. There was a demand to open them and this demand was related to the national problem of unemployment. In rural areas, the high-handedness of Mahajans was related to the nationalization of banks and the hope that through nationalization easy credit facilities would be made available in rural areas. There was a demand to install electricity for use in agriculture or the starting of new industries. Also, the listing of demands from the constituency which I studied showed a move from demands to satisfy personal or parochial needs to demands to satisfy regional needs.

**T**he six national issues that were debated the most by the electorate were:

- (a) to remove or not to remove the privileges and privy purses of Rajas and Maharajas;
- (b) to nationalize or not to nationalize the banks (and the removal of the stranglehold of the Mahajans);
- (c) the fundamental rights and the removal of the right to property;
- (d) democracy vs. dictatorship (tanashahi);
- (e) *Garibi Hatao* vs. Indira Hatao;
- (f) stability vs. instability of the Central Government.

At every one of the meetings I attended a combination of these

issues was presented to the electorate by the speakers of both the contending parties, and there was a distinctly noble ideological response from the electorate attending the meetings. For the first time in the history of India, during elections national issues had a local impact, and local issues got aggregated into national ones. This was healthy because now we can raise poverty as the biggest issue of India and get votes for it to solve the problem.

**T**he other phenomenon is the tying-up of the interests of a community with a certain ideology. This happened on all sides. The community feeling is strong in Rajasthan. The Jats, the Gujjars, the Meenas, the Rajputs, the Mahajans, the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes identify with their own community. But the significant thing is that the comparatively progressive communities—the Jats, the Gujjars and the Meenas—have identified themselves with a radical posture. They feel that the interests of their community would be better safeguarded through a loosely termed 'socialism'. The Jats know that power could lead to welfare. Their inclination is to fight for power. Rajputs would fight for their chief; honour, glory and nothing else. Socialism they interpret as State Control that would provide them with facilities (irrigation, electric power, tools, credit, fertilizers, market facilities, adequate price for agricultural commodities, transport, education, medical assistance etc.). The distributive side of socialism is not much of their concern at present. The Gujjars and Meenas though less demanding have come to believe that socialism will better their lives. Thus, the interests of the community have become ideological.

The Mahajans on the whole are anti-socialist. Socialism to them means usurpation of their livelihood—property, money, business. They are also more legalistic and strict upholders of property rights as 'enshrined in the Constitution'. The ideology they have evolved is

status-quoist—the freedom of the individual should be supported, the Constitution ought to be preserved, *tanashahi* (dictatorship, equated with the desire to amend the Constitution) should be checked. Everyone should be given opportunities to develop and the State should not interfere in the development of each individual. Again, the interests of the community have become ideological.

**T**he Rajputs ideologically are in an ambivalent position. Their mental horizons are confined to their past glory, and bravado takes the place of working for the interests of the community. They have no tact. The solidarity of the group is maintained through kinship relationships and loyalty to the head of the clan, or a chieftain or a Maharaja. The community, apart from kinship feeling, is splintered and divided. The internal animosities are deep and persisting. Two-thirds of the Rajput population of Rajasthan is blindly loyal to its respective head (the Maharana of Udaipur wields the loyalty of Rajputs residing in Udaipur—mostly Sisodias; the Maharaja of Jodhpur wields the loyalty of Rajputs residing in Jodhpur—mostly Rathors; the Rajmata of Jaipur wields the loyalty of Rajputs residing in Jaipur—mostly Kachawas). This is the first splintering. There is thus no over-all leadership available even for this loyal two-thirds of the population. Furthermore, these royal houses do not pull along well with each other. This is the second splintering. So far they have failed to build any united front and even in this election the electoral victories were individual ones rather than that of any party or the community as such. The other third of the population is just ambivalent. Those Rajputs who are functioning as officials are loyal to the government. This third also has no visible leadership. But, the majority of Rajputs are impoverished and the traditional chiefs can hardly cope with their problems.

It could be said that the Rajputs are the most backward looking

group that I encountered in Rajasthan. They have personal and kinship loyalties but no ideology. They also have no sense of solidarity as a community which would allow them to function as an effective pressure group in Rajasthan politics. Here, the lack of an ideology is a hindrance for it will not allow their interests to be articulated, far less aggregated. The situation for the Rajputs would not remain static with increased education, growing economic hardships, the disappearance of traditional leaders and with that blind personal loyalty. Observing the rapid progress of other communities will tend to create an urge to turn themselves into an interest-fulfilling community. Here is a potential that may move to the extreme Left.

**T**he scheduled castes and to a lesser degree the scheduled tribes have become conscious of their poverty. They took the *garibi hatao* slogan of Indira Gandhi seriously. If she has built a charisma in Rajasthan it is within this community. The common response of theirs was 'Indira Gandhi *garibi hataigi, vo hamare sath hai*'. There are hardly any leaders of scheduled castes in Rajasthan. In earlier elections, they followed the lead of their feudal chief, or a prestigious Mahajan of the locality, or one or two scheduled caste local leaders in the Congress. The two who have local influence are: Amrit Lal Yadav and Bhikka Bhai. There is no all-Rajasthan scheduled caste leader. Moving away from the former two attachments they have found a leader in Indira Gandhi. No Rajasthan leader can move this community as much as Indira Gandhi can. In this sense and through their support she will have a big say in State politics and specially in Rajasthan politics.

In comparison, the scheduled tribes still have feudal affinities—specially in Udaipur Dungarpur and Banswara region (the area of the Bhils). The Bhils are on the ancient emblem of the Maharanas of Udaipur. They still consider

themselves the protectors of that State, the friends of Rana Pratap and close to the Rajputs, and a warrior race. Though of short stature there is considerable affinity between the Bhils and Rajputs—in their customs, marriages, feasts and festivals. There is a movement for inter-marriage between the two. The latter are proving more conservative in this than the former. The position of the Bhils is as ambivalent as that of the Rajputs. But the image of Indira Gandhi—as the protector of their tribe—is just beginning to impress them.

The very tying-up of the interests of respective communities with a certain ideology will loosen the parochial community ties and draw the attention of these differentiated communities to economic and social issues, that cut across individual community interests and create a new sense of identification that is beyond the community. This conversion process is taking place in Rajasthan, albeit slowly, but in the near future the varied communities to safeguard their respective interests (which are economic, social and political) will continue to play an important role in Rajasthan politics.

**T**he party-wise position in the mid-term parliamentary poll in Rajasthan looks favourable to Sukhadia (1967—12 seats<sup>1</sup>, 1971—14 seats) but he did not do that well. He lost all three seats in his own home State of Udaipur. The feudal chiefs won all the seats, except Bharatpur, which they contested (Jodhpur, Jaipur, Bikaner, Kota, Udaipur, Jhalawar plus Tonk). The Alliance (SSP) candidate lost the Banswara seat by just over 1000 votes in a situation where the Cong-O candidate (member of the Alliance) got 16,154 votes and thus led to the defeat of the Alliance-SSP candidate. The table given indicates the strengths of each party since 1952.

The whole South and South-Eastern part of Rajasthan showed

1. It initially won 10 seats in the 1967 elections—and two later in the by-elections.

TABLE

Parties	1957		1962		1967		1971
	Seats contested (and won)	% of votes polled	Seats contested (and won)	% of votes polled	Seats contested (and won)	% of votes polled	Seats contested (and won)
Congress	22 (19)	53.9	21 (14)	37.5	20 (10)+2*	39.9	23 (14)
Swatantra	..	..	10 ( 3)	18.1	15 ( 8)—1*	27.4	( 3)
Jana Sangh	7 (—)	11.0	11 ( 1)	9.3	6 ( 3)—1*	9.9	( 4)
PSP	2 (—)	1.1	..	..	1 (—)	0.1	..
SSP	..	..	6 (—)	3.7	5 (—)	3.3	..
CPI	3 (—)	4.8	5 (—)	2.9	1 (—)	0.3	..
CPI (M)	..	..	..	..	3 (—)	2.5	..
Others	2 (—)	1.6	9 ( 1)	3.9	1 (—)	0.2	..
Independents	23 ( 3)	27.6	49 ( 3)	24.5	62 ( 2)	16.4	( 2)
Total:	60 (22)	100.00	111 (22)	100.00	116 (23)	100.00	..

\*The New Congress won two seats later in bye-elections; one from the Swatantra and the other from the Jana Sangh.

considerable influence of the Jana Sangh and the Maharana of Udaipur (three seats in Udaipur Division) one in Kota and one in Jhalawar. The Udaipur city seat was given by the Alliance to the Swatantra, but not having any obvious candidate to nominate they were influenced by the Jana Sangh to put up a candidate that belonged to the Jana Sangh (not knowing that he belonged to it). Thus the Jana Sangh got five (not four) out of the nine opposition seats; the Swatantra got two (not three—Jaipur and Tonk seats) and two went to Independents (Maharajas of Jodhpur and Bikaner). The Jana Sangh won three seats (in Udaipur) through the active assistance of the Maharana of Udaipur. The Jhalawar seat it got through the assistance of the Maharaja of Jhalawar. Only the Kota seat (which is a stronghold of the Jana Sangh) it got on its own strength. Out of the five seats, only one can be credited to the Jana Sangh's own efforts.

The Swatantra Party's position has dwindled. The majority of Rajmata Gayatri Devi has come down from 1,90,000 (in 1962) to 90,000 (1967) to 50,000 (1971). The Tonk seat was won by merely 1835 votes. The royal house of Jaipur had no influence in the constituencies that were in the erstwhile

Jaipur State, viz., Sawai Madhopur, Dausa, Sikar and Jhunjhunu. The two independents, the Rajmata of Jodhpur and the Maharaja of Bikaner, also did not show any influence in the constituencies falling in their former States. The Rajmata of Jodhpur who entered the elections for the first time got in by merely 20,000 votes and, what is more, out of the eight Assembly constituencies she lost in six.

Overall, the New Congress fared well in these elections, that is in relation to the resources and influence that the Alliance and opposition mobilized, (the coming together of all the opposition parties; the joining of the Rajas and Maharajas with the opposition; and the availability of enhanced resources both financial and by supporting canvassers to the candidates of all parties. The capitalists, six in all, who stood and lost helped in the financing of other opposition candidates.)

The achievements or failures can be seen from varied points of view. The New Congress gained in Rajasthan (enhanced seats from 12 in 1967 to 14 in 1971 and won 122 out of 184 Assembly constituencies,<sup>2</sup> carried out a successful

holding operation against powerful odds; showed the diminishing influence of the old rulers; Sukhadia's position weakened (lost 3 out of 4 seats in the Udaipur Division—his home base); Jat influence in Congress became more powerful (all the Jat seats won over by the New Congress and the BKD splinter Jat movement was wiped out); Rajas and Maharajas won in all places except Bharatpur but with diminished margins. None of them—except the Maharana of Udaipur could sway the results in constituencies which were in their old territory.

The problem of minorities in Rajasthan is primarily concerned with Muslim votes. Out of a total population of 1,88,24,820, 13 lakhs are Muslims (1961 Census). Two-thirds of the Muslim votes went to the New Congress. Out of the remaining 1/3rd, the majority abstained. A few went to old rulers (Jaipur-Jodhpur). The Jana Sangh people said that the rulers of Jodhpur and Bikaner remained independent to get Muslim votes. The inclusion of the Jana Sangh into the Alliance lost the latter a large number of Muslim votes. After the election, Gayatri Devi said 'I am totally secular and can't work with the Jana Sangh'.

The Alliance was not a well knit group. It had no common

2. The figures indicate that the Congress had a majority in 122 out of 184 constituencies. This time the votes were aggregated and counted Assembly-wise.

platform except *Indira hatao* on which to fight. Contradictory ideological postures disheartened the cadre of each party. There was a fair amount of in-fighting between the electoral managers of one party and the workers of another. The more vigorous parties of the Alliance tried to get as many seats as possible (by any means). The Jana Sangh was the strongest of them all in organization, cadre strength and strategy of election. The Swatantra revolved around the Rajmata of Jaipur just to fight the election. The Cong-O had no organization worth the name and the only seat they got allotted—in Ajmer—depended heavily on the influence of their local candidate. The SSP bargained but due to lack of resources and scattered pockets of influence it could not put enough pressure to get its voice heard. Its workers were the most demoralized of all by the formation of the Alliance. Jana Sangh workers worked for candidates of all Alliance parties with varying degrees of fervour. The Jana Sangh leaders candidly admitted after the elections that the Alliance candidates belonging to other parties would not have won without the support of their cadre, and also that their cadre could not work with the same fervour as they worked or would have worked for their own candidates. (Sukhadia very shrewdly picked up this issue when he said at a number of election meetings that he would have understood Jana Sangh workers strongly canvassing for their own candidate but he just could not understand their fervour for the others.)

The unsuccessful haggling and bargaining led to the breakaway of the BKD from the Alliance (at an early stage)<sup>3</sup>; it also led to a situation where the Alliance gave a seat to one party (in Alwar to Cong-O; in Udaipur to Swatantra) but in both cases the candidate

that got nominated was a Jana Sanghi. There was cross-fighting between Alliance parties (it happened between the Cong-O and SSP in Banswara and Ganganagar; and between the Cong-O and Jana Sangh at Barmer). This created a feeling which came out clearly from different party spokesmen after the elections. The BKD collided with Alliance candidates in six constituencies. The Alliance in fact was a loose electoral alignment with no integration at any level, organizational or ideological. Even joint campaigning was not that effective. Apart from haggling for seats, there was the constant attempt by the Jana Sangh to strengthen its support base at the expense of another party. The real tussle here was between the Swatantra party and the Jana Sangh and the leaders of both the parties were convinced after the elections that the Alliance harmed them. The Jana Sangh has now declared that it will 'go it alone'. The Swatantra's fate depends on what Rajmata Gayatri Devi decides to do.

The Swatantra and probably the Cong-O would opt for a merger of existing parties into a single party with a single programme and also a common ideology.<sup>4</sup> The Jana Sangh and SSP do not accept this alternative. Both of them went out of the Alliance as soon as the elections were over. The Jana Sangh wanted that other Alliance parties should merge with it on its own programme and ideology. The others would not.<sup>5</sup> The Cong-O has been wiped out in Rajasthan and has no local base anywhere. Its leadership is also old and fading. The SSP right from the beginning was unhappy about this Alliance and the elections have eroded its thesis of an anti-government posture for its own sake. It has had an agonising reappraisal on this issue at an all-India level.

Its attitude in Rajasthan will depend on whether an anti-government posture wins (Raj Narain) or a Socialist alliance posture wins (Limaye-Fernandes). So far as one could see, it will go it alone in Rajasthan for the only significant Leftist group in the State is the New Congress, which is in power.

Without the assistance of the rulers, the Jana Sangh—the strongest of the Alliance—would have looked badly mauled (one seat in Kota). The leader of the Jana Sangh in Rajasthan claimed that Rajmata Gayatri Devi would not have won without its support. The Rajmata of Jodhpur and the Maharaja of Bikaner used Jana Sangh cadre support. In these elections the winning of nine seats by the opposition depend on mutual support given by the Jana Sangh and the old rulers to each other. The other Alliance groups did not count. But the Rajmata of Jaipur, the Maharaja of Bikaner, and Maharawal of Dungarpur (leader of the Opposition in the Rajasthan Assembly, Swatantra MLA and father-in-law of Bikaner) said after the elections that the rulers were secular and would never join the Jana Sangh. The Rajmata of Jodhpur (specially her son, Gaj Singh), the Maharana of Udaipur, the Maharao of Kota and his son, the Yuvraj of Kota, do lean towards the Jana Sangh.

The Gwalior royal family is putting pressure on these latter princes to join the Jana Sangh. At the same time, the Maharawal of Dungarpur asserts that he will never allow the Maharao of Kota (his 'dear friend') to join the Jana Sangh. He also says that he will send his second son to impress upon the Maharana of Udaipur not to join the Jana Sangh. The Maharana is the most ambivalent of all the rulers of Rajasthan. Uptil now he had tacitly supported Sukhadia by keeping withdrawn from politics and allowing Sukhadia to build his base in Udaipur Division. Sukhadia earlier and even in this election treated the Maharana with respect. Sukhadia talked with him before the elections suggesting that he should not

3. Kumbha Ram Arya described the leadership of the Alliance after this party's breakaway from the Alliance—as 'petty minded, small time opportunists, who are out to grab power, unmindful of the larger interests of the working people'

4. The Maharaja of Bikaner has suggested the formation of a new party.

5. Some of the feudal chiefs may join the Jana Sangh. The Scindia has already been taken in the Executive Council of the Jana Sangh, Udaipur, Jodhpur, probably Alwar and Kota may support that party.

enter politics. The Maharana first remained ambivalent and then jumped into the fray. He won in Udaipur. Some of the ruling chiefs would welcome the formation of a new single opposition party. The Jana Sangh and SSP will not help them to do that. Single handed they can only help to diminish their influence. They do not have the staying power nor a firm base, nor the organization, nor the cadre, nor an ideology that supports the interest of any community in Rajasthan. Support on the basis of personal loyalty ('malikpana') cannot last long. For the next five to ten years the politics of Rajasthan will be the politics of the New Congress.

**T**he role of mass-media in the elections has not been studied in depth. Did the transistor—which has now extensively spread to rural areas—help to build the image of Indira Gandhi? In rural areas one often heard the comment: 'Ek hawa hi esi chali'. That 'hawa' they call 'Indira hawa'. What is the explanation for it? In some rural areas Indira Gandhi is more well known than even Jawaharlal Nehru. And Indira's image got identified with 'garibi hatao'. How did this happen? What method of mass-communication did the trick? An analysis of radio programmes from AIR station, Jaipur, does not indicate any special propaganda building the image of Indira Gandhi. She spoke only twice before and after the elections. There was no special propaganda material. No time was given to any party for political talks. The news were by and large factual with only a slight bias—like saying something you do not want to, emphasized in a parenthesis. There was no attempt at image building. After the elections, a select interview showed that people voted for Indira Gandhi and not the candidate of the New Congress. In some areas people had not even heard of the candidate.

Sukhadia's resignation has come as a great surprise to many. The political circles in Jaipur were agog with all manner of guesses: 'Indira has removed him'; 'he left

because he wanted to give an opportunity to a younger man'; 'he resigned as a ploy to strengthen himself'; 'he wants to go to the Centre'; 'he is tired and just wants to retire'. No one really knows the inside story. Some guestimates could be made on the basis of the analysis given above.

First, Sukhadia did not fare well in the mid-term parliamentary poll and he temporarily lost his base in Udaipur;

Second, the Jats have won an overwhelming victory in the same elections and defeated most of the affluent and prestigious opposition candidates;

Third, the scheduled castes and tribes, the most numerous of the communities of Rajasthan, showed that they had broken from the influence of the traditional leaders (who were the 'back bone' of the old Congress) and established a direct linkage with Indira Gandhi. Her electoral influence in Rajasthan, in consequence, got strengthened;

Fourth, Sukhadia had functioned through astute political manipulation of different communities and regions. The results of this election had left no great scope for him to reject one alliance and build another to his advantage. Thus, over the new power factors he had less manoeuvrability;

**F**ifth, ideology has never been a strong point with Sukhadia. He is basically pragmatic. On the other hand, politics in India has taken a sharp Leftist turn. This is a function of our present socio-economic condition. 'Garibi hatao' is not only a slogan (which it was for the old Congressmen) but an ideology which has to be turned into programmatic action. A new symbiosis is taking place. The old heterogeneity is dead. Where the old Congress represented the entire cultural, linguistic, regional and caste heterogeneity of India, today's New Congress is trying to build up painfully a homogeneity of ideology and action for this terribly impoverished country. The new electoral support base of Indira Gandhi demands homo-

geneity of outlook in a constitutionally pluralistic system (where different parties could contend for power). This is not Sukhadia's forte. He could turn Left (as he did in most of his election speeches) but he could only act Centre. These perceptions are visible in Sukhadia's speech to resign (he called it the 'inner urge' and a genuine desire to bring a younger person—ideologically speaking—as the Chief Minister) and in Indira Gandhi's desire to have a man who was in line with her own thinking and dependable to her programme.

Sixth, the elections were coming soon and the pressure from the Centre must have been there to change the leadership before the election so that the new man might have the choice of his own candidates in the next Assembly.

**S**ukhadia had a long innings. He did much for the development of Rajasthan and gave the State a certain stability. But the problems of Rajasthan were running faster than him. Some of his friends pulled him back. He was brought up in a different generation that believed in gradual change. India is past gradual change. Its problems are enormous—of poverty which is hunger, malnutrition, unemployment, sickness galore, jumping population growth which consumes much of what is produced, a certain callousness to suffering. And in this situation also a slow rate of growth, unutilised production capacities, criminal wastages and conspicuous consumption, lack of managerial skills, supremacy of amateurs in policy making, galloping sub-standard education, timelessness that is fathomless, and a general sense of apathy and impotence. In these conditions a new generation emerged—committed and impatient. No centrist attitude could cure these ills or allow the country's pace to move at a slow steady rate. May be one would like to think that the biggest reason for change of leadership was to give an ideological heave—a new dynamic push in a fairly smooth static situation.

# Concrete action

K. P. KARUNAKARAN

AFTER the recent electoral victory of Mrs. Gandhi and her party, there is such a rush of commentators and political analysts who want to praise and glorify her that one is reminded of an event in nineteenth century Kerala when a Maharaja built a light-house. On that occasion, a large number of poets wrote various verses in praise of the achievement of the Raja. The Raja, in turn, gave the poets lavish gifts in appreciation of the poems. The most creative poet of the day was silent. The Maharaja met him and asked him why he was not writing on the light-house. He immediately wrote two lines which meant: 'The light-house is wonderful. I must have my share of money.' Taking him as the model, I can also conclude this article with the comment: 'Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the Congress (Sanjiva-led-Congress, to quote

A.I.R. jargon) are wonderful. Give me my share of spoils.'

In fact, there is nothing wonderful in this spectacular victory of the Prime Minister. In the years immediately following the achievement of independence, when the Congress was at the height of power, one theme of the commentators and the scholars on Indian politics was that there existed a 'one-dominant-party' system in India. In 1967 the tone was different. At least one commentator wrote on the 'Jana Sangh as a phenomenon'. In his article I was taken to task for having suggested in an article in the SEMINAR that the Jana Sangh was a regional party confined to the north western parts of India. The Jana Sangh, we were told, was a growing-party and a party of the future in all the States of India. The 1967 elections produced another

corament also. It was that India was disintegrating. According to those who held this view, some parties like the communists, who wanted the Jana Sangh to be banned, emerged as the significant rising power in Kerala and Bengal while in Delhi, U.P. and Madhya Pradesh the Jana Sangh, which wanted the communist parties to be banned, emerged as the rising power. To add to this, in Madras—now Tamil Nadu—and in the Punjab, the D.M.K. and the Akalis which were frankly regional in character, came to power. Thus, all the factors which were conducive to the disintegration of India were present after the elections of 1967.

Now, a new situation presents itself after the 1971 election. India, unlike the neighbouring countries of Asia and many African countries, has achieved political stability and cohesion. Only a few steps have to be taken towards social revolution and a higher rate of economic growth. If China has Mao's thoughts, we have Indira Gandhi's thoughts. On foreign affairs, a handsomely produced book of Dinesh Singh has already come out. It is a pity that he is not again our foreign minister! But the country does not have to worry because Mrs. Indira Gandhi is at the helm of affairs.

Is it all that simple? If the earlier one-party dominance theme and the disintegration theme of 1967 are proved wrong, one cannot rule out the possibility of the optimistic, and opportunistic, analysis of the present situation going wrong. At best what one can say of the long-term effects of the 1971 election is that by providing political stability at least in the immediate present and by a certain degree of political mobilization for progressive causes it has achieved, it has opened up new vistas for social revolution and economic growth. As Gandhiji used to say, peace achieved by stability without the accompaniment of other desirable developments is the 'peace of the grave'. In the present context in India it will not only be the grave of the aspira-

tions of the people but also the ambitions of those who are in power.

How can the opportunity offered by the elections be used by those who are in power and steps be taken for concrete action?

One important pre-requisite for implementing a radical programme in the face of opposition from different levels is for the leaders and the party to have a clear ideology. The vote to the Congress in this election was clearly a vote against reaction. But for the Swatantra, the Jana Sangh and the Organisation Congress allying themselves and taking a well-defined and positive role in favour of reaction and conservatism, Mrs. Gandhi could not have had this landslide victory. In that sense it was a negative vote—a rejection of conservatism and reaction. But what is positive about it? The representatives of the ruling Congress and particularly Mrs. Gandhi gave a few maxims about bank nationalisation, its impact, abolition of privy purses and amendments to the Constitution. There were some vague suggestions about social revolution, social change and socialism. But, at no time was a clearly-worked out, consistent ideology presented to the people. Neither the election manifestoes of the Congress Party nor the President's address to the Parliament suggest the inauguration of the new era.

The purpose of pointing this out is not to suggest that a neatly worked out theoretical and bookish ideology could serve any purpose. But there should be some vision about the government's internal and foreign policies and some general line suggesting their sense of direction. In practical politics it is not always possible to act strictly on the basis of ideology. Occasionally some compromises and alterations have to be made and there have been rare occasions when even great leaders threw their theories overboard and replaced them by new ones because the former were unrealistic. It should be remembered that it is one thing to make alterations and

it is entirely another thing not to have an ideology. Pragmatism for the sake of retaining power is nothing but opportunism and in the history of the modern world no one has beaten the social democrats in rank opportunism.

It was a pity that in the Congress under Nehru, only he put forward fresh ideas. However, he chose wrong persons to implement them so far as domestic affairs were concerned. His Finance Ministers—Shanmukam Chetty, John Mathai, Deshmukh and T. T. Krishnamachari—would have been chosen to similar posts by the British Government in India. On foreign affairs also, Nehru was the spokesman. But he was also the Foreign Minister who was trying to implement his ideas. Nehru knew that foreign policy was interrelated to domestic developments. He even kept the Chief Ministers informed of the major trends in foreign policy and world affairs. Our present Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh, has no field of specialisation. He is a jack of all trades. Give him any portfolio—food, railways, defence, home—he would perform equally well in any one of them. Such a Foreign Minister will also find it difficult to give an analysis of world trends and Indian reaction to them in a manner intelligible to ambassadors, Ministers and the Chief Ministers of States.

At present there is a better accumulation of facts in different ministries and on an official level a more systematic analysis of them than in Nehru's time. But the political analysis has to be done by political leaders. Only they can formulate policies based on facts supplied to them and on the political understanding of the people. This is completely lacking in the Congress Party. Neither the party leaders inside the government or outside are working on these lines. But, unless this is done, the victory of Mrs. Indira Gandhi in the last election will mean nothing. Neither Jagjivan Ram nor Sanjivayya is a centre of ideas. The Prime Minister, herself, is a political technocrat



and not a political thinker. There are no Fabians in the Congress Party.

What would be the basis of a new policy and new ideology? This is to some extent answered during the election campaign by Mrs. Gandhi herself by the statement that the country should move to the Left of the Centre. How far Left? Nationalisation of a few industries and the banks and the development of heavy industries in the public sector are the routine channels of the administrators and political leaders. This gives them power for patronage. But one question which is never raised is this: 'who should pay and make the sacrifices for the development of the country?' Terms like 'Left', 'Centre' and 'Right' have some meaning in India although they do not have the same meaning in this country as they have in some of the industrially advanced countries.

In India, language, minorities and caste are major problems. A new ideology for the nation should take into account these Indian realities. Neither foreign experts nor Indians trained to think only within the western framework can help in the working out of an ideology which will take into account all these problems. Fresh thinking and a capacity to reach bold conclusions in an original manner are needed. Neither Mrs. Indira Gandhi nor some of the people around her—the spurious cosmopolitans whose ignorance of this country is matched only by their willingness to give advice on all matters—have displayed any capacity to grapple with these typically Indian problems and develop an ideology which will be a combination of the Left-of-the-Centre line in western terms and a revolutionary approach to the solution of India's unique problems.

This takes us to two other problems; how would a social base and a party machinery be built up for the successful implementation of a new radical programme? The New Congress came into being as a result of the split in the old Congress. It was not built up as

a result of social and political struggles. The members of the new party were also not selected on the basis of their allegiance to any definite views. When the split took place, many of them chose the new organisation because Indira Gandhi was in power. These are not the ideal conditions for a revolutionary party.

Let us take the social base first. There is practically no peasant movement behind the party. The most significant trade unions are also not with the party. There are, of course, some student organisations behind it. The major section of the low castes—the underprivileged sections of the society—and some minorities like the Muslims, who had their own grievances, are with the Congress. They have, however, no definite objectives

But, undoubtedly these are great sources of revolutionary power and, in the Indian context today, it is idle to expect these minority groups to evolve a consistent social and economic philosophy. But, it is also unnatural to expect these groups not to function communally. The leaders of these communities belong to the privileged sections of the society and they will, after a certain stage, try to retard the formulation and implementation of a radical programme. This is already the case of the Muslim League and Indira Gandhi's certificate to it that it is not a communal party in a State like Kerala is not based on facts. If the Harijans work as a group under Jagjivan Ram's leadership, they may, under certain circumstances, support radical measures; but, under other circumstances, the leaders of that group with their vested interests, may function as a break on any radical step.

In these circumstances it is important to have a solid social base for the party and this should be built up by people with a clear vision in regard to social and economic questions.

While those who can be the sources of power inside the party

are confused and badly organised, the well-organised vested interests, who are conscious of their techniques of actions, are trying to entrench themselves inside the party. It is true that some of them had made their investments in groups which were hostile to Mrs. Gandhi. But they are not foolish enough to put all the eggs in that basket. They have some eggs in Mrs. Gandhi's basket also.

So far as the social base is concerned, the picture is this: well-organised vested interests have entrenched themselves in some sections of the new Congress Party and other citadels of power which are nominally headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and there is an unorganised and amorphous group of people with her who can be the sources of power for radical action.

It is significant that when there was mass political mobilisation during the last elections it was this ill-organised amorphous group which won the battles. But, in a parliamentary group such a group can be very passive when there are no elections. Struggles like strikes, *hartals* and other methods were used by Gandhi to sustain the mass base of his campaigns. In Kerala and Bengal, the communists use similar tactics today. The results are sometimes disastrous but not always so. To take an instance. In Kerala the peasants could behave as if the land reforms Bill was valid, and take over the lands even when the courts declared some of its provisions to be unconstitutional. There can be many other achievements if mass action sustains a legislative measure.

Here comes the importance of the machinery of the party. And nothing is more ill suited to perform the task of initiating a social revolution than the present organisational machinery of the Congress. There is no restriction to its membership. Defectors from other parties were welcomed by its leadership, and very often they were rewarded. Those who are occupying important positions in the party will, generally, give up

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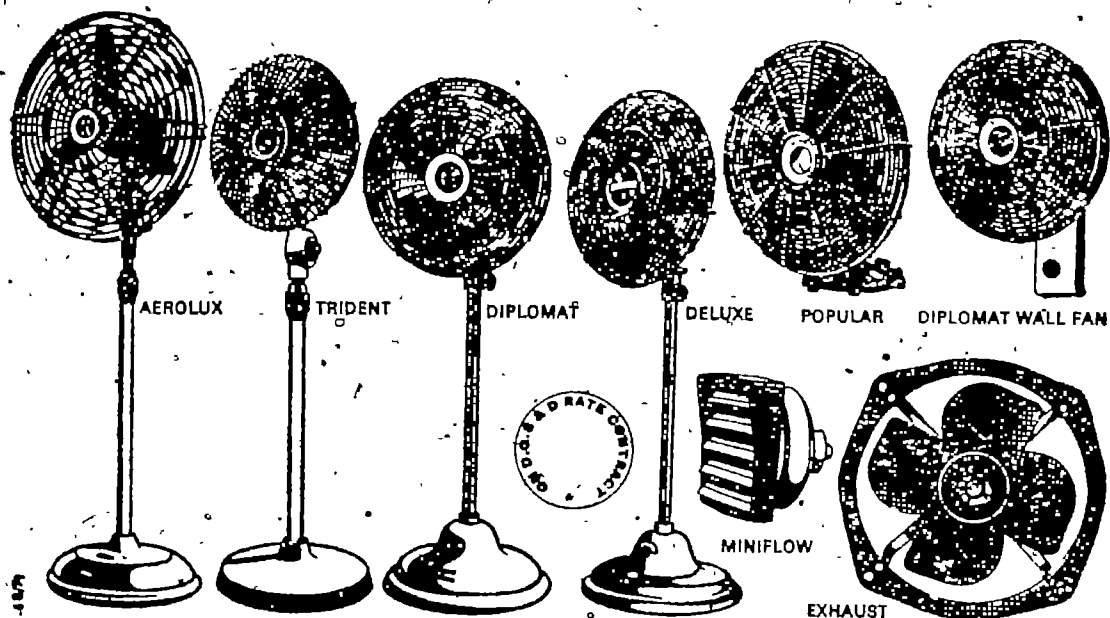
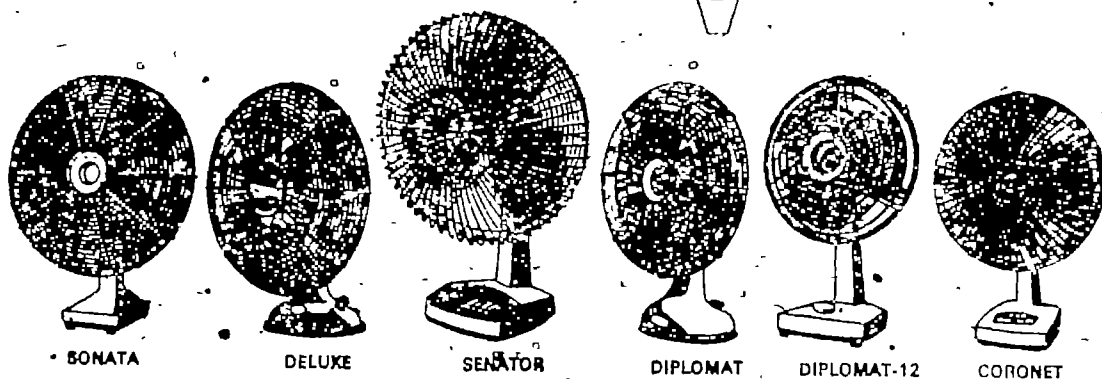
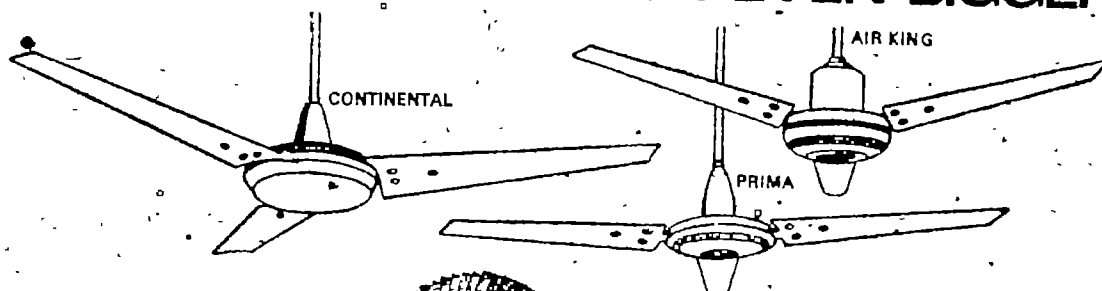
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their positions in favour of some lucrative posts in the government. There are no party schools worth the name. And there is no authoritative journal of the party which educates its members and gives expression to the programme and policies of the party.

The present leaders of the party are using government journals and publications, the All India Radio and the publications of such organisations as the Planning Commission to propagate and explain their views. Even in one-party States, these publications and journals have their own limitations. That is why the party runs journals and publications independently of the government. India is not a one-party State. Nor has the dominant party system returned to this country. In many States the Congress Party is not in power. It is difficult to say how the Congress Party will fare in the next elections in many States. Under these circumstances, there are limitations on the machineries of the State apparatus. They cannot be exclusively depended upon. One may, however, add that they have useful functions to perform in countries like India. But they have to be supplemented and superseded by non-official publications.

Many will be wondering why I am enumerating all these prerequisites for the successful launching of a radical programme by Mrs. Gandhi's party and its members while they have no intention of performing any such tasks. Whether they have or not, the impression conveyed to the electorate is that they have. In view of this fact, the party and its government cannot escape from some of these tasks.

Of course, it is fully realised that these tasks can only be limited. No one imagines that a vast revolution is contemplated by the ruling party. No revolution is undertaken without a revolutionary movement. India has not undergone it during the past few years. The movement started by Mrs. Indira Gandhi was for the implementation of a limited radi-

cal programme. It started from above. But to sustain itself it had to have some base below. What is maintained here is that that base cannot be exclusively built by the State apparatus.

Moreover, with all its limitations, one cannot ignore the fact that the only all-India party in the country is the ruling Congress. In the immediate future, that is the only political force which can perform some radical tasks for the whole nation. This takes us to another question. How can national politics and regional politics be at least reconciled if not co-ordinated? Like the Akalis, the D.M.K. may also decline as a political force. Even if these regional parties decline in strength, one cannot ignore the fact that political forces in different parts of India have moved in different directions. From an all-India viewpoint, Kerala and Bengal are the two regions where the politics have taken a shape quite different from that of other States. Here, the most well-organised conservative forces are represented in the Congress Party. The Marxist party, which is the first largest party in both the States, represents the most well-organised radical movements. In Kerala and Bengal; all parties other than the Congress and the Marxist are of no consequence. One significance of this election is that it has exposed the weakness of other parties in these two States.

It has also exposed the weakness of innumerable other parties in other States. This is a healthy development.

During and after the elections, some leaders of the ruling party conveyed the impression that by defections, the use of the office of the Governor and by other methods, they would try to replace other parties from positions of power. If this impression is widespread, this would not be conducive to the strengthening of democracy in this country. The ruling party at the Centre can afford to be self-confident and allow other parties to rule in the States. Of course, even in the

Centre it should not do anything to prevent another party coming to power. This is the essence of democracy. Neither the President nor the Governor should go beyond the spirit of the Constitution to help the party in power at the Centre. The floor of the Assembly in the State should be the forum for determining whether or not a particular party or government enjoys confidence of the legislature.

Other parties should also follow some conventions. Any effort on the part of each of the coalition parties to expand its strength is understandable; but it should not be its immediate and only objective.

And, parties like the Marxist party should also realise that they have to function within an all-Indian framework. They must re-examine their assessment of the use of parliamentary institutions in India and their concept that the government of any State, under their leadership, is primarily an instrument of struggle. Unless this is done there cannot be any reconciliation of national and regional politics and if there is no reconciliation and if there is a fight to the finish, it is not the Marxist who will win in India.

The most important impact of the recent elections is that it has indicated that democracy has staying power in India. In practice, many of the extreme Rightist and Leftist parties have accepted this by participating in the political processes provided by the Constitution. But in theory they have not done so. It they do so in theory as well, it will strengthen Indian democracy. Even then the democratic elements in the society will have to meet the challenges posed by the extremists. As they are confined to the fringes, it is not difficult to meet their challenges.

From the viewpoint of meeting these challenges also, the dominating elements in Indian political life—represented by the ruling Congress Party under Mrs. Indira Gandhi—should move from empty slogans to concrete action.

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committees? The Cultural Revolution is regarded as a triumph of Mao's 'pure, uncompromising and radical' policies, but why are persons, who were the most active leaders of the Cultural Revolution and who seemed to symbolise the party's 'pure' line, being systematically liquidated under charges similar to those levied against Liu Shao-chi and his supporters? Why is the order of precedence of the politburo members constantly changing? Why is it that even after the formation of the party committees, leading cadres in the provinces are described by their position in the revolutionary councils? Why is it that in the change from the revolutionary committees to party committees, in at least 9 cases, persons apparently belonging to the Lin Biao faction have been disgraced or demoted? Why is it that army commanders, who had shown sympathy and even support for Liu Shao-chi during the Cultural Revolution, have not only retained their positions but even gained promotions?

In world affairs, too, Peking has been pre-

dictably unpredictable. The excessive reactions of the Cultural Revolution have been succeeded by a new flexibility, hitherto unsuspected, an opening towards the United States and a vigorous drive for a seat in the Security Council and for the establishment of diplomatic relations with a wide range and variety of countries. The new stance in China's foreign policy needs to be studied and analysed in depth.

The present turmoil and uncertainty in international relations makes it all the more imperative for India to be informed of the current developments in China in order to evolve suitable responses. It is time that Indian observers and scholars took a good and close look at China and analysed dispassionately what is happening there.

This issue has been organised by the Institute of Chinese and Japanese Studies, Delhi University, and we hope it will help in clearing some of our thinking on China.

# New style

MIRA SINHA

IT is by now accepted as fact that China's foreign policy has indeed entered a new phase. If a dramatic confirmation were needed, it has been supplied by the surprise announcement of President Nixon's forthcoming visit to Peking.

How this new phase is to be evaluated depends largely on how the writer approaches China. Therefore, it is essential to clarify the assumptions and the approach with which this writer

embarks on the precarious task of analysing Chinese foreign policy.

Briefly, the underlying assumption is that contemporary China is a peculiarly unique phenomenon, that in dealing with it one is dealing with a nation and a people that live according to certain internal compulsions. In so doing, Maoist China refuses to accept those 'objective' forces and events which, in the West, are seen as exercising a deterministic

influence over State behaviour, and China seeks to replace these by new concepts. In order to do so, China (or should one say Mao?) begins at the very beginning by questioning all theories of human nature which are also the philosophical source for the personification of the State, and for theories of the supremacy of 'national interests', the goal of power, etc. The substitute offered is the continually developing law of class struggle, the Marxist view of the State as the creation of the capitalist classes, a new concept of power and the legitimacy of wars of 'national liberation'.

In order to ensure this, Mao attempts to transform the images and values of man, seeing in this the only real guarantee that the desired objectives may be achieved. Yet, Mao is not a utopian, in that he does not expect men and societies to make the 'great leap forward' from the old system to the new, merely by the acceptance of Marxism-Leninism. Instead, he accepts the reality of a long and tortuous transitional period in which the view-points and methods of the new system have to be applied and advanced if the new goals are to be realised. The Maoist concern, therefore, is with manipulating change, restricting State behaviour, accepting the existence of class contradictions even within a socialist society, etc., in order to ensure the future realisation of a communist society.

China and Mao may well be attempting the impossible and may well revert to the accepted norms of State and human behaviour. At present, however, China has not yet begun to move away from this revolutionary world view. During this Maoist phase, I believe, we should attempt to interpret China according to its own formulations and its own framework, while keeping alert to signs of fundamental compromise with these revolutionary principles. Such an approach is, of course, open to dismissal on the charge that it is

too simplistic, too trusting and too uncritical. However, as a social scientist, I find it impossible to dismiss the Maoist experiment out of hand, merely on the grounds that this has never happened before or that a broadly similar Soviet experiment has failed.

Since no one approach can be said to be the only valid or realistic approach, I leave the task of critical analysis from accepted western assumptions to others, while attempting only to extrapolate and apply the Maoist framework, style and methodology, to China's foreign policy.

China maintains that the principal concern for all socialist countries must be to advance the international communist movement. Therefore, the *universal aim* for all socialists is the overthrow of imperialism, as a system. According to Maoist methodology and in foreign policy terms, the *principal contradiction* is still between the oppressed nations and the imperialists. However, imperialism today, is a two-headed creature—the 'U.S.'; and 'social-imperialism' as represented by the USSR. U.S. imperialism however, is viewed as being on the decline, while social-imperialism is beginning to rear its head. In addition, 'social-imperialism' being 'revisionist' is a 'renegade' and a 'traitor' to Marxism-Leninism and threatens to corrupt the revolutionary stream. Thus, according to Mao, in order to fight imperialism it is first necessary to struggle against revisionism. The *principal enemy* is therefore both the USSR and the U.S.

Again, according to Maoist formulations, the *general principle* which must guide both the international communist movement and foreign policy is that of *proletarian internationalism*, which, put simply, means the unity of all socialists; fraternal relations between socialist countries and the proletariat of the world; and a recognition of the significance of the anti-imperialist revolutionary struggles of the op-

pressed peoples and nations. The *strategic principle* for foreign policy however, is that of slighting the enemy *strategically* while respecting him *tactically*.

In other words, China acknowledges the basic weakness of the socialist countries, and is consequently advocating that the anti-imperialist struggle be conducted, not on the battlefield, nor by economic means but principally by diplomacy plus 'people's wars'. In this situation the foreign policy *tactic* is that of the United Front, namely, to ally with all forces that can be united with on the basis of common concerns while retaining the initiative, and the willingness, to deal with present 'allies' who may be potential reactionaries and enemies.

Thus, the mode of interaction between States has to be defined on the premise that the role and the rights of the State have to be strictly curtailed. The State, in Maoist terms, has to be accepted only in 'tactical' terms, but denied in strategic terms; it is the people and not the State who are 'actors' in the international system. Consequently, Maoist dictum denies that a State can have *national interests* which reign supreme. Instead, the State is granted only limited *legitimate* rights, such as the right to full sovereignty over its territorial area, and the right to exercise such privileges as are granted to States even within the present 'capitalist' inter-State system.

The foreign policy of socialist countries, therefore, is no more than a tactical adaptation of the general line of the international communist movement to the contemporary realities of the nation State system, and is only one means of carrying on the essential class struggle.

In brief, the role of foreign policy is to advance the international communist movement; to deal meaningfully only with the real 'actors', i.e., the socialist countries and the peoples of other countries; and to deal with non-socialist States as a holding ope-



ration, a form of class struggle, without granting these units more than tactical importance.

'The foreign policy of our Party and Government' declared Lin Piao at the 9th Party Congress in April 1969, 'is consistent'. But, from the outside, it has not appeared to be so. Indeed, Chinese foreign policy appears to have gone through several phases. For instance, in 1950, the decision to lean to one side; in 1954, Peaceful Co-existence; in 1957, the East Wind prevails over the West Wind; in 1963 the Chinese alternate general line for the international communist movement, etc. Furthermore, because of the internal turmoil in China, the period from 1966-69 is an uncharted period which gave rise to certain deviations and aberrations from Maoist formulations and the Maoist style.

Given Peking's obsession with maintaining the appearance of consistency and its far-reaching sense of privacy, we are not yet provided with sufficient details of the difference between the Mao 'line' and the Liu 'line' to pinpoint and assess these aberrations in the field of foreign policy. This hampers a careful evaluation of the present phase of Chinese foreign policy. Indeed, the whole of China's foreign policy since 1949 will have to be reviewed in the light of Sino-Soviet polemics and the Mao-Liu controversy since these represented the struggle between an 'incorrect' or 'revisionist line' and the 'correct' or 'Maoist line'.

**R**eporting to the 9th Party Congress in April 1969, Lin Piao went on to explain that China's foreign policy is 'to develop relations of friendship, mutual assistance and cooperation with socialist countries on the principle of proletarian internationalism; to support and assist the revolutionary struggles of all the oppressed people and nations; to work for peaceful coexistence with countries of different social systems on the basis of the Five Principles of mutual respect for

territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence, and to oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war.'

According to this formulation, China's foreign policy is not one-dimensional or uni-linear. In order to analyse Peking's foreign policy behaviour, these three strands of foreign policy, the ordering of priorities, the limits and principles within which each strand operates, and their simultaneous development have to be kept in mind.

**T**he 1960s was the decade of Sino-Soviet polemics, pertaining to issues fundamental to the advance of the international communist movement. The basic issues were whether the nature of imperialism could change given the destructive nature of nuclear technology; whether relations with the imperialists could be based on peaceful coexistence as the Soviets interpreted it; whether the ultimate struggle could be determined by peaceful competition instead of by war; that was the principal world contradiction; what path should be followed in the transition to socialism, etc. On all these issues China dubbed the Soviet leadership to be 'revisionist' and 'renegades' to socialism. By so doing it destroyed the erstwhile 'socialist camp' and transformed it into a Soviet 'bloc'.

Today, the only countries that China recognizes as socialist are North Vietnam, North Korea, Albania and, perhaps, Rumania. There are as yet no signs that China is attempting to create a monolithic camp such as had existed earlier. While upholding that Mao Tse-tung's thought is the 'Marxism-Leninism of this era', Peking has not institutionalised this or given Mao the status earlier enjoyed by Stalin. Instead, it accepts and encourages the elevation of national leaders' into supreme national symbols. For instance, the role of Kim Il Sung in Korea or of Ho Chi Minh in

Vietnam is not subordinated to that of Mao.

**P**eking also accepts national varieties in building socialism, albeit on the basis of the universal tenets of Marxism-Leninism. This means, in essence, a refusal to compromise with imperialism despite technological advances and national weakness; the insistence on armed struggle; the courage to fight a war, even a nuclear war, should the imperialists resort to one and no denial of the legitimate rights of any State, however small. The unity among socialist countries can, according to Mao, be a loose one in structural terms, but must be an intimate one in ideological terms. Mutual exchanges must be conducted on the basis of full equality; consequently, the National Party of any one State cannot determine the general line for other parties and States. In addition, the Maoist style demands that the distribution of the economic cake be so undertaken as to give more to the socialist countries than to others.

In the past two years, it is significant that the only visits undertaken by the Chinese Premier outside China, have been to 'fraternal' North Vietnam and North Korea. There has been a marked increase in Chinese aid to both these countries, particularly to Hanoi, and unqualified support for their goals of national liberation and unification. The convening of the 'mini-summit' of the Indo-Chinese people last year, brought about a subtle transformation of the political scene in South East Asia. The Vietnam war has been merged into the united struggle of the Indo-Chinese people, with the NLF, the Pathet Lao and the Khmer Rouge all professing mutual support for each other's individual struggles, while China provides the 'reliable rear'.

This demonstration of proletarian internationalism and of shared though separate goals indicates that peace in Indo-China would be settled in a manner very

different from that which is anticipated. It should not be Nixon and Chou who decide the shape of things to come, but the actual protagonists themselves. In other words, a Viet Nam agreement, a Cambodian agreement and a Laotian agreement should precede a Sino-US meeting and the convening of a Geneva Conference. The emerging pattern seems to be one between separate and equal entities with no overt 'big brother' role for China. How this will be institutionalised, while remaining functional, remains to be seen.

There have been four broad phases since 1949 in China's manner of support for such struggles. The first called for open armed struggle on the Chinese pattern; the second at Bandung and after declared that 'revolutions were not for export'; the third, rather shadowy, was the attempt after 1958, to support armed struggles and communists in opposition to the Soviet insistence on peaceful transition to socialism and its use of neutral States as allies; as for instance in the case of Peking's support for Bagdash and the Algerian FLN. The fourth existed through the Cultural Revolution. It revealed an undifferentiated support for most dissident or people's movements, as well as for splinter parties within the parent Communist Party.

The current Chinese attitude reveals both sophistication and a high measure of realism. The basic principle is that revolutions must be home grown for 'if a people do not want revolution it cannot be imposed on them from outside'. Secondly, Peking recognizes that there are 'wars of resistance' (as the Viet Nam war is now called) of 'national liberation' (the unified struggle of the Indo-Chinese people, and of the Palestine Liberation Organization), armed struggles such as in Thailand, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, India, etc; and the 'struggles' of the proletariat against domestic reactionaries or revisionism; and finally the 'struggle' of peoples and nations against U.S.

imperialism and social imperialism, e.g., Japan and Czechoslovakia.

While all these deserve support, according to China, direct support is to be given only to those that are 'genuinely Marxist-Leninist and to those that are on the verge of victory as, for instance, the Viet Nam struggle. The others must struggle on their own. China's support can only be indirect in that China must continue the global struggle against imperialism. Since 1969, China has very critically appraised those communist parties that call themselves M-L. In Lin Biao's report and after, no such parties are specifically named, and China no longer applauds those parties which it had hailed in the late 1960s, for instance, the Naxalites in India (despite China's none too normal relation with this country).

Peking today gives open support only to the Indo-Chinese and the Palestinian struggles and continues to recognise the PLO mission in Peking. It has condemned the 'Che Guevarists' of Ceylon who were not M-L by its criteria, and has maintained a discreet silence on the Bangla Desh freedom movement, perhaps because it is undeniably 'a peoples movement' directed against domestic reactionaries. In brief, it appears unlikely that China will set itself up as a command centre for revolutions elsewhere as the Soviets did in the 1930s.

According to Maoist formulation, as mentioned earlier, relations between socialist countries and all others can be conducted only on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

This has been the most evident strand of Chinese foreign policy since 1969. Peking has, since then, not only mended its diplomatic fences where it could, but has furthermore exchanged diplomatic relations with some 30 countries in all five continents. The list includes seven members of NATO, Austria etc.; and several Arab African and Latin American countries. Turkey, Iran, Australia,

Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, etc., are in the process of negotiating with China or of reappraising their relations with Peking and, as early as October 1968, Peking had offered to establish such relations with the U.S.

While this advance is undeniably dramatic, the meaning and limits of this normalization should be carefully considered. Briefly, it means limited tactical cooperation against a common enemy, with no abatement of the class struggle. It means therefore that no such State can become an 'ally' of China. And it demands the self-restraint in State behaviour that is implicit in China's interpretation of the Five Principles. All the agreements that China has concluded so far have demanded recognition of Peking as the 'sole legitimate government of China' even though the actual wording has differed. In turn, Peking has offered full support for the 'national sovereignty and territorial integrity' of the other State, and for the struggle against 'super power' intervention. This is the basic formula advanced by Peking which is supported by Peking's assertion that it will behave as a 'great' or 'super power'.

Peking has also seemed willing to rectify its relations with India on this pattern, and there has been a distinct lessening of its hostility towards India, despite the crisis in the sub-continent.

Seen in this perspective, the forthcoming Nixon visit to China shrinks in significance. By Peking's definition, the Sino-US relationship cannot approximate to 'detente' or 'collusion' or any other such intimate relationship. It constitutes only a part of Peking's calculated, rational and systematized foreign policy schema. In short, Peking is prepared to deal with Washington on a limited business-like basis of give and take. It will not desist from opposing the U.S. where it functions as a 'super power' and an 'imperialist'. A warning to this effect was contained in Mao's statement of 20 May, 1970, calling upon the people of the world

to 'unite and defeat the U.S. aggressors and all their running dogs'.

Moreover, Peking has made it amply clear that it will not compromise on Taiwan or on the issue of Chinese representation in the U.N., both of which are legitimate rights and therefore non-compromisable. It has, however, carefully separated the international aspects (the U.S. military presence in Taiwan and the Taiwan Straits) from the domestic aspects of the Taiwan problem. Some statement in recognition of this by the U.S. will be demanded by China.

Both these issues are linked up with China's new eagerness to take its lawful place in the U.N. Last year's vote on the Albanian resolution won a majority for the first time but failed to get the required two-thirds vote. There seems little doubt that Peking will be seated in the U.N. this year, either because the U.S. will no longer treat this matter as an 'important question' or because China will be able to muster the necessary support. If Taiwan is 'expelled' or leaves the UN of its own volition, the ground will be prepared for the U.S. to treat it as an internal matter for China.

There is one jarring note in Peking's policy of peaceful existence; its harsh criticism of the revival of Japanese militarism. This too is combined with overtures to Japan—increasing trade and an offer to normalize relations, provided Japan ceases to support Taiwan. To speculate in keeping with the Maoist style, it seems probable that if Japan were to do so, China would reciprocate by offering to conclude a non-aggression treaty with Japan and would reinforce this with a 'no-first use' of nuclear weapons declaration.

The most striking difference between looking at China's foreign policy from a 'realist's' point of view and from the Maoist perspective is the obvious one, namely, peaceful coexistence which seems most evident and most significant but is by Maoist calculation,

the least so in substance. 'Revolution' said Mao, 'is the main trend in the world today' and it is this on which Mao claims he is building the future not only of China but of all mankind.

Consequently, how China behaves, now that it has been granted the status of a great power, will be of decisive importance. In the New Year's Day editorial this year, China declared that it would never behave like a great power. By its own protestations, therefore, China must carve out a new style of State behaviour if it is not to be accused of selling out the revolution. In its main aspects this would call for:

- (a) no creation of a Chinese 'bloc' qua military bloc;
- (b) no imposition of pro-Chinese governments in neighbouring countries by force of arms, or by manipulation of domestic politics;
- (c) no use of U.N. forces or machinery to control dissensions within or between smaller States;
- (d) no adherence to great power agreements which deny smaller States what the great powers have, such as the non-proliferation treaty;
- (e) no participation in Big-Five meetings as a general rule;
- (f) no military 'alliances' with non-socialist States;
- (g) no extensive or continuing territorial claims on neighbouring States;
- (h) a transformation of the U.N. in keeping with China's support for the equality of all States however small, and
- (i) no indulgence in sabre rattling, gun boat diplomacy or nuclear blackmail.

If this sounds like a tall order, it is only what Mao has set up for China, and has promised the revolutionary people of the world. The seventies will be the decade in which to judge whether China is or is not revolutionary by its own standards.

# Ideology and utopia

MANORANJAN MOHANTY

THE cultural revolution began in China while the Socialist Education Movement was going on. As early as December 1964, Mao had declared in a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC): "The main target of the present movement is those Party persons in power taking the capitalist road".<sup>1</sup> He came to this conclusion after earlier campaigns for resisting non-proletarian trends had failed.

On November 10, 1965, Shanghai's *Wen-hui Pao* carried an article by Yao Wen-yuan attacking the playwright and Deputy Mayor of Peking, Wu Han, for his play, *The Dismissal of Hai Jui*. This launched the movement in the cultural field. Early in 1966, cultural revolution work-teams

were sent to Peking University. But soon Mao discovered that they were not carrying out his line. On May 16, Mao sent a 'Circular' laying down the guidelines for the new movement. The youth of the Peking University responded to his call in great numbers. The Peking Municipal Party Committee headed by Peng Chen was the first to be reconstituted in June. During this time, Red Guards in large numbers started the mass criticism of the 'revisionist line'. The CPC Central Committee met in its Eleventh Plenary Session and on August 9, 1966, adopted a 16-Point Decision on the outlook, strategy and tactics of the cultural revolution. Thereafter the movement was extended to the national level.

From the winter of 1966 to the spring of 1967 there was an 'adverse trend'. Anti-Maoist forces had the upper hand in some places

1. Lin Piao, *Political Report to the Ninth Congress* (Appendix to the CPI-M Politburo Statement of May, 1969) p. 25.

like Shanghai. This led to violent clashes between different groups. Responding to Mao's call that 'the People's Liberation Army should support the broad masses of the left'. The PLA intervened in Shanghai on January 23, 1967. Not until April 1967, was the superiority of the Maoist forces over the strength of the opponents clear. Soon after that, new organs of power started coming up all over the country. The Revolutionary Committees were composed of revolutionary cadres, the PLA and representatives of revolutionary masses. Heilung kiang (Manchuria) was the first province to establish this new organ of power on January 31, 1967. The last of 29 Revolutionary Committees were set up in Tibet and Sinkiang on September 5, 1968.

The Enlarged Twelfth Plenum of the CPC Central Committee met in October, 1968, to sum up the experiences and named Liu Shao-ch'i as the 'hidden traitor, renegade and scab'. In April 1969, the Ninth Congress of the CPC passed the party's new Constitution and started the process of party reorganization by electing a new Central Committee and a Politburo presumably loyal to the Maoist line. Thereafter, preparations were made at the grassroot level to rebuild the party. After the commune level Congresses were held, Provincial Party Congresses were called. The first Provincial Party Committee was elected in Hunan in December 1970. By the end of June 1971 Party Committees were formed in 24 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities.

Intense mass criticism on ideological issues and party reorganization to get rid of 'revisionists' were the main features of the cultural revolution. The Maoists discovered a new form of struggle in this movement. Mao said in February 1967: 'In the past we waged struggles in rural areas, in factories, in the cultural field and we carried out the socialist education movement. But all this failed to solve the problem because we did not find a form, a method, to arouse the broad masses to

expose our dark aspect openly, in an all-round way and from below.'<sup>2</sup>

With this brief account of the course of the cultural revolution, let us now turn to some of the different interpretations of this movement. It is not necessary to discuss the imputational theory of L. La Dany who described it as the 'decline of yet another Chinese dynasty'. Few have taken this view seriously.<sup>3</sup> Robert Lifton's explanation that Mao wanted to achieve 'revolutionary immortality' also does not have a sociopolitical perspective.<sup>4</sup> One view of the cultural revolution which has a number of advocates describes it as a factional power struggle. The Soviet critics who share this view call Mao a petty bourgeois anarchist whose clique tried to usurp power with the help of the army. This struggle looked like an army coup d'etat to many western observers who are familiar with army take-overs in the 'third world'. This kind of explanation should be accompanied by some further queries. Did the rivalry between the two groups arise out of personal, regional or professional conflicts or did they represent different political lines on socialist construction? Is the Chinese PLA just like any other professional army?

There is another explanation from the structural-functional perspective. Some authors believe that all systems undergo a steady process of institutionalisation. According to them, socialist systems are no exceptions to this. When the Chinese socialist system got increasingly routinized, a section of the political leadership apprehended that their revolutionary goals were being compromised. According to this view Mao wanted to resist this trend by launching the cultural revolution.<sup>5</sup> It should be stated here that the theory of institutionalisation is widely questioned today. In the

Chinese context the relevant question is whether or not the prevailing trend in China did not base itself on a certain political line. In fact, the routinization process was feared to be comparable to what happened in the Soviet Union which some Chinese Communists regarded as revisionism.

In another interesting interpretation, Karl Menhart says that the cultural revolution was a part of the worldwide youth movement challenging the establishment.<sup>5A</sup> Mao's Big Character Poster 'Bombard the Headquarters' was symbolic of this. Though the Chinese and western upheavals glorified some common values and norms, the former was centrally initiated and had a clear ideological perspective. The youth revolts in Sorbonne, Columbia and Berkeley were spontaneous and they lacked any ideological line.

Finally, there is the explanation given by Lin Piao in his Political Report to the Ninth Congress. According to him, the cultural revolution was a struggle between two ideological lines. The anti-Maoist ideological line was represented by Liu Shao-ch'i, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, P'eng Te-huai, P'eng Chen and others who had established control over a major segment of the party and State organization. Therefore, in order to re-establish the Maoist ideological line, basic organizational restructuring was necessary. Instead of merely removing the opponents by force, Mao wanted to involve the broad masses in refuting the 'revisionist line' so that the ensuing revolutionary orientation would be firm and enduring. Thus, the cultural revolution was a mass movement for ideological and organizational consolidation.

In all these interpretations, the basic point of difference is whether ideology was the issue or was it a power struggle. In my opinion, the crux of the debate during the cultural revolution

2. Ibid. p. 26

3. L. La Dany, 'Mao's China: the Decline of a Dynasty' *Foreign Affairs* XLV: No. 4, July 1967.

4. Robert J. Lifton, *Revolutionary Immortality*

5. Chalmers A. Johnson, "Cultural Revolution in Structural Perspective", *Asian Survey* Vol: 8, No. 1, (January, 1968).

5A. Karl Menhart, *Peking and New Left* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

related to the ways of achieving the Marxist-Leninist goals in real life. Mao and Liu represented two sets of ways and both claimed to be 'good communists'. Any judgement as to who is really a 'good communist' would only follow from one's own assumptions. The relevant question here is whether or not the cultural revolution was a mass movement to consolidate an ideological line. A fruitful discussion of this question would be facilitated if we had clear ideas about (i) the meaning and nature of ideology, (ii) the relationship between ideology and organization and (iii) the distance between ideology and practice.

Karl Mannheim made a useful distinction between ideology and utopia. According to him, ideologies are 'situationally transcendent ideas' which are 'organically and harmoniously integrated' into the world-view characteristic of the period. On the other hand, 'a state of mind is utopian when it is incongruous with the state of reality within which it occurs, and aims at transforming the existing historical reality'.<sup>6</sup> This distinction, however, came to be falsified in the revolutionary experience of the twentieth century. It was realized that all progressive ideologies aimed at radically restructuring existing social relationships and therefore, looked 'utopian' or in Mannheim's words 'incongruous with the state of reality'. In fact, as Chalmers Johnson points out, what Mannheim called 'ideology' is the value-system of a society.<sup>7</sup> Radical elements are bound to be part of all revolutionary ideologies and these are branded as 'utopian' by its opponents.

Ideology is a statement of ends, means and an outlook. It sets goals for the society involving a departure from the status quo. It suggests a range of alternative ways of moving towards those ends. Ideology also provides tools for analyzing the social environ-

ment. This concept of ideology emerges out of the existing literature on the subject with the exception of that range of writings which are associated with the once famous 'end of ideology' approach.

After a degree of effectiveness of the Marxist ideology was demonstrated with the establishment of socialist systems in several countries, an anti-ideological trend appeared in the social thinking of the West. It was argued that ideology was a simplistic dogma which cannot guide the complexities of life. People like Daniel Bell and Clark Kerr argued that technological development went through a similar logical course irrespective of diverse ideologies.

Those who believed in the 'end of ideology' approach found interesting ways to interpret the events in China. To give one example, Benjamin Schwartz described the Chinese revolution as an agrarian revolution with little similarity with Marxist theory.<sup>8</sup> Later, he developed a theory of 'disintegration of ideology in China' according to which the cultural revolution was a further departure from communist ideology.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the Great Leap Forward was interpreted as a programme launched by the dogmatists and was wisely followed by the 'pragmatists' who understood the 'logic of technological development'.<sup>10</sup>

As an interesting coincidence, a reversal of the 'end of ideology' trend began in the West precisely when the cultural revolution was going on. The youth upsurge in the United States and in Europe questioned the basic values, goals and norms underlying the capitalist systems.<sup>11</sup>

By their very nature, ideologies are rooted in human experiences.

Men set goals exercising their vision and think out ways. They do this taking into account the historical experiences of other people and their ideas. Ideologies develop as new situations are confronted by its practitioners. Those analysts who take ideology as a static dogma divorced from social experience tend to derogate its importance in the social process. This can be seen in some of the interpretations of the cultural revolution. In this movement, Mao wanted to stress that an ideology in order to safeguard its purity must continuously develop. He suggested that the revolution must continue under the dictatorship of the proletariat. This new formulation was interpreted as heresy by those who hold a static view of ideology.

The second important conceptual relationship which affects our analysis refers to ideology and organization. The experiences of twentieth century movements prove that ideology is identified with organization. The organization gets its identity, solidarity and work-norms through its ideology. Similarly, ideology is upheld, interpreted and concretised through the organization. In brief, ideology and organization mutually reinforce each other and influence each other's development and decay. It is important to understand this relationship, for in the cultural revolution ideological consolidation went on simultaneously with party restructuring. To many observers, however, this phenomenon only looked like an organizational purge or factional power struggle.

The third important conceptual point relates to ideology and practice. As we saw before, ideology contains challenging social goals, the full realization of which would take a long time. Sometimes observers ignore this in pointing out discrepancies between ideology and practice. They say that ideology is meant for propaganda purposes and pragmatism for real

6. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963) pp. 192-95.

7. Chalmers A. Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966).

8. Benjamin Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the rise of Mao* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1951).

9. Schwartz, *Communism and China: Ideology in Flux* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1969).

10. Jan Prybyla, *Political Economy of Communist China* (Scranton: Intext, 1970).

11. A summing up book drawing the epitaph on the controversy is C. I. Waxman, *The End of Ideology Debate*.

policies. We should remember the correct relationship between ideology and practice when we hear that pragmatists have taken over. Besides, all policies have to reconcile the demands of both ideology and the environment and move towards the goals.

Taken in this perspective, the importance of the cultural revolution cannot be exaggerated. Lin Piao describes this movement as 'a great revolution in the realm of superstructure'.<sup>12</sup> The need for this arose from the fact that disarming the bourgeoisie in the socialist revolution does not eliminate the bourgeois culture. Mao has always emphasised the role of the superstructure. He said in 1937: 'True, the productive forces... play the decisive role... But it must be admitted that in certain conditions, such aspects as the relations of production, theory and the superstructure in turn manifest themselves in the principal and decisive role.'<sup>13</sup>

According to the Maoist account the 'revisionists' had been controlling the entire cultural field. As an important article said: 'From a number of important positions under their control in the fields of journalism, education, art and literature, in the academic field and in publishing and other branches of culture... they spread bourgeois revisionist poison widely and launched frantic attacks against Mao Tse-tung's thought.'<sup>14</sup> While the 'revisionists' dominated these fields, in other spheres of administration and economy they also operated with varying degrees of control.

The central task during the movement was to defeat the 'revisionist line' ideologically and organizationally. The ideological issues ranged from the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat

to specific organizational modes in the factories. The most important issue was class struggle. The Maoists emphasised that classes do not disappear during the period of the proletarian dictatorship. Class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat continues till the end of the period which is very long. Therefore the socialist revolution continues. On the other hand, the Liu Shao-ch'i group is alleged to have minimized the importance of class struggle.<sup>15</sup>

Another Maoist dictum is to put 'politics in command' in all fields so that there is steady progress towards socialist political goals. In the economic sphere, this meant that workers should be motivated to work hard not because of material incentives but because of political commitment to revolutionary goals. The slogan of the cultural revolution was 'grasp revolution and promote production'. In the army according to this line soldiers should not only be trained in warfare but also in politics. In fact, Defence Minis-

ter Lin Piao had reversed the process started by his predecessor, P'eng Te-huai, by politicising the army and making it both 'red and expert'. The same is true of administration where officials and managers were becoming bureaucratic and not putting sufficient stress on political objectives.

Politics must also take command in the field of education according to Mao. The 16-Point Decision of August, 1966 specifically spoke of educational reform: 'In every kind of schools we must apply thoroughly the policy advanced by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, of education serving proletarian politics and education being combined with productive labour, so as to enable those receiving education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and to become labourers with socialist consciousness and culture.'<sup>16</sup> This line was being opposed by the Liu Shao-ch'i group for a long time. They wanted to put stress on acquiring skills and expertise.

Yet another principle that the Maoists reiterated was the mass

### THREE IDEAL TYPES OF ORGANIZATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

	<i>Max Weber</i> <i>Legal-rational</i>	<i>M. K. Gandhi</i> <i>Moral-rational</i>	<i>Mao Tse-tung</i> <i>Political-rational</i>
Organizational sphere	State	Society	Community (People)
Member (Subject)	Citizen	Participant	Fellow-participant
Source of authority	Constitution	God (Divine Mandate)	Ideology
Structural principle	Hierarchy	Decentralization	Democratic Centralism (Mass Line)
Functional principle	Differentiation	Integration	Integration
Training orientation	Capable (Expert)	Committed	Committed and Capable (Red and Expert)
Primary incentives	Material	Spiritual	Revolutionary
Productivity orientation	More (Affluent Society)	Better (Good Society)	("More, better and quicker" (Good and rich Society) ]
Typical Administrator	Bureaucrat (Mr. Secretary)	Social worker (Satyagrahi) (Vikash Bhai)	Cadre (Comrade Lin)

12. Lin Piao, op. cit. p. 27.

13. Mao Tse-tung, "On Contradiction", *Selected Works* (Peking, 1965) Vol. I p. 336.

14. "Editorial Commemorating the 45th Anniversary of the founding of the CPC", *People's Daily* (July 1, 1966).

15. This was one of the ten charges against P'eng Chen reported in the *Hung Chi* Editorial of July 4, 1966 and put out by the NCNA on that day.

16. This was the Tenth Point. See the Decision in *Peking Review*, Vol. IX No. 33 (Aug. 12, 1966) P. 10.

line. They alleged that the CPC under Teng Hsiao-p'ing's leadership had not been functioning as a mass organization. Groups, local bosses and bureaucrats had come to monopolise the party apparatus. Whenever mass movements were launched, the Liu group did not allow full-scale mass involvement. In fact, Liu Shao-ch'i admitted in his 'Self-criticism' that during the Socialist Education Movement he wanted to rely solely on 'work-teams' and not follow the mass line.<sup>17</sup>

The cultural revolution was a mass movement waged by a section of the CPC leadership to consolidate this Maoist line ideologically and organizationally through mass debate and party restructuring. The character of this Maoist line can be better understood if we compare it with two other ideal types, those of Max Weber and M. K. Gandhi. Though the Gandhian model is not being implemented anywhere, its goals and norms serve as useful reference points. Weber's legal-rational model was first suggested in contrast to the 'patrimonial', 'traditional' and 'charismatic' ideal types and was meant for countries embarking upon capitalist industrialization. Today, in the western countries and their former colonies, it is the Weberian model which looms large in the process of social management. Recently, however, there is a quest to go beyond the legal-rational framework in all these countries. In the search for new values, goals and norms one can think of numerous ideal types of political organization all of which claim to be 'rational'. People who believe in a model glorify it as their 'ideology'. The same model is regarded as 'utopian' by its opponents. This is what happened in analysing the cultural revolution. To some it was ideology undergoing consolidation. To other analysts it was 'utopia' being used by some and opposed by others for their respective factional ends.

17. *Collected Works of Liu Shao-ch'i* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1968).

## Socio-cultural determinants

KRISHNA PRAKASH GUPTA

MAOIST Chinese society reveals a number of striking discontinuities from its pre-modern past. The Confucian world of hierarchically ordered relationships has been replaced by an egalitarian model of a classless society. The ideal of Great Harmony has given way to the theory of continuous class struggle. Active youthful rebellion is prized instead of passive filial piety. From the indignities of bound feet and concubinage, Chinese women have become esteemed co-workers in building a new China. Beggary



and prostitution are completely eliminated. Ascriptive privileges are attacked and conspicuous consumption is frowned upon.

The conventional withdrawal of the masses has been transformed into an epic programme of peoples participation in planning and implementing governmental campaigns. The inter-structural autonomy of the local communities has been reorganized into inter-dependent units, closely controlled from the Centre. The art and poetry of orchids and bamboos is recreated in large dams and other reconstruction projects. The stamp of Maoist austerity and puritanism is visible on every Chinese institution.

In analyzing the roots of this breakthrough, one generally begins with the role of political ideology. Mao's general approach to human behaviour and his visions of an ideal social order are said to be crucial operative factors behind the vast social transformation taking place in China. The slogan of 'Politics takes Command' has been interpreted to mean that the deliberate and purposive use of ideology has produced a stunning effect on the society by cleansing it from its feudal and bourgeois forms. The 'tradition' has been completely remoulded to suit the requirements of Maoist modernization. Social institutions have been fully controlled in terms of political beliefs and goals.

The evidence adduced in supporting this generalization is massive. It is shown that economy, education, religion, culture and even seemingly innocuous things like cuisine and gastronomy are all guided by the sacred precepts of the Red Book. Mao is said to be the new Emperor-God dispensing eternal truths and perennial wisdom. His writ runs large and his thought permeates the collective consciousness of China. His ideology is evidently the master-determinant of social change.

This interpretation, shared equally by the Chinese communists and modern Sinologists, is used to perpetuate two related

myths. One is to invest Mao with a new breakthrough in the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism. Maoist ideology is credited to have broken away, first, with the feudal and bourgeois behaviour of the KMT regime and, second, with the quasi-capitalist and revisionist thought of the Soviet Union. The second myth, which is increasingly becoming popular among various New Left groups, borders on considering Maoism as a new model of modernization for the developing nations. The Chinese 'experiment' is supposed to contain miraculous and universally relevant powers of change.

The first myth attempts to explain the processes of social change in China in terms of well-known communist categories. The second glorifies Maoist ideological response to the exigencies of modernization. The first envisions the coming Marxist utopia in China; the second anticipates the existence of a pure modern society without its concomitant dysfunctional forms. In either case, the pattern of social change in China is supposed to produce unadulterated modernity.

This notion, simplistic as it is, ignores the inner tensions and contradictions of the Chinese case. Part of the problem is, of course, our inability to go beyond the confines of the officially released information. The planned dissemination of propaganda material by the Chinese leaders has created an illusory world of virtuous China, free from modern pathologies. A more serious problem, however, is the dissociation of the Chinese case from the Chinese socio-cultural system. Both in assessing Mao's contribution to Marxism-Leninism and in universalizing the relevance of his ideology, one tends to separate the modalities of social change in China from the particularities of Chinese cultural tradition and social structure. This separation is both false and facile.

**S**ocial change in China can be examined fruitfully only in the wider context of the Chinese social system. Maoist ideology is

not operating in a vacuum. It is not completely autonomous and is not acting as an independent variable unilaterally interfering and affecting social reality. In a broader historical perspective, Mao is not adding to the theory and practice of 'alien' communism but responding to the specific institutional demands of China in certain predetermined modes, and using only incidentally certain components of Marxism-Leninism. Tradition has not been erased and museumified in China; it continues to affect the modes of perceiving, analyzing and resolving social problems.

Beyond such traditional categories, the substantive aspects of Maoist ideology are governed by the structural needs and limitations of the Chinese system. It is not only the progressivism of his ideology that is shaping the society but also the backwardness of the society which is shaping his ideology. The effect is reciprocal. In the ultimate analysis, the rationale of change is derived from an interaction of the revolutionary charisma of Mao's thought and the developmental stage of the Chinese society. Moreover, the roots of Mao's charisma lie in the deeper psyche of China's cultural tradition itself.

In order to understand social change in China, one must, therefore, transcend both the Marxist-Leninist categories and presumed universalistic criteria of growth. A proper framework of analysis would include, in descending order of specificity, a general definition of the socio-cultural system, the inner dialectics of tradition, the pattern of social change, and an analysis of the concrete conditions of modernization. A simultaneous description of the Chinese case on all the four levels will explain its deviation from the 'two worlds of development'. It will reveal, at the same time, the underlying processes of socio-cultural determinism.

On the highest level of abstraction, the ideological and organizational components of the Maoist approach can be traced far back in

the Chinese tradition. In general, the Chinese social system has been based on a principle of hierarchy. Analytically, this principle determines the specific individual roles in subservience to collective goal-attainment. Organizationally, it means that primary social values are always realized in groups and there is no concept of purely individual achievement. Personal virtue is defined in terms of an approximation with the collective ideal.

The core belief that sustains this system is allegiance to a central authority with the one-sided moral imperative to serve the superiors. The chief instrument of social control is progressive homogenization of ideas through careful dissemination of fixed rules and prescribed texts. This is effected through power and authority but the ultimate sanction is derived from the morality of the rule itself.

At this level, there has been no change in China. The Maoist world-view is incremental and accumulative rather than totally disjunctive. This is not to belittle the gigantic dimensions of change involved in the process of social transformation but merely to indicate the patterns of cultural continuity. The communist breakthrough does not signify a complete break with the tradition but a process of normative upgrading through which conventional values are realized by totally unorthodox expressions of personal conduct. The pervasive presence of unorthodox behaviour in terms of Confucian norms has generated comforting illusions among Maoists that the last link with the old feudal culture has been finally snapped to enjoy a ritualistic rebirth in a socialist utopia. There is no doubt that traditional norms are widely attacked and radically altered but the underlying configuration of values which symbolically expressed these norms is not only resurrected but is prospering in its transmuted forms.

The moral underpinnings of Mao and the present Chinese emphasis on personal cultivation of virtue

in a broader framework of conformity has a characteristic ring of tradition. It hardly requires legitimation from the Marxist normative criteria and is certainly much older than either Marx or Lenin, the new Gods of China. Mao has extensively manipulated the prevailing symbolism of loyalty to collective good but has transferred it from the clan to the party. The superiors are no longer older in age but more faithful to the Maoist line. The new Chinese hierarchy places the loyal party functionaries at the top. The farther one is from the Maoist virtue, both ascriptive (e.g., peasant origin) and achieved (e.g., party commitment), the lower one is in the rungs of social stratification. One's achievement is still tested by the degree of conformity with the system.

Protest is allowed only to rectify the deviant elements and bring them in line. Strong in-group pressures are used for 'voluntary' submissions and internalization of the official creed. For most practical purposes, individuals operate in and through small groups which function as the primary vehicles of political socialization. Education is completely regulated and it is supposed to make the man 'red' as it makes him an expert.

This leads us to the second level of description where tradition can be further analyzed in terms of its inner dialectics. Contrary to popular assumptions, Chinese culture has not been a monolithic whole. In fact, it fused together three functionally different sub-cultures, viz., the moralistics of Confucianism, the authoritarianism of legalists and the aesthetics of Taoism. The idealized personality combined the functions of a scholar, an official and an artist. The model of 'sageliness within and kingliness without' enjoined that virtue must be actualized in concrete practice. Accordingly, the administrators of State policies also transmitted values of the Establishment.

In this framework, idealism was always conservative, attempting to restore the pristine purity of

accepted values. The concept of justice was grounded in the concrete conditions of each case rather than codified principles of abstract logic. This principle lent an enormous amount of flexibility in dealing with domestic problems. The canons of support and opposition could vary with situations. So long as the contradictions did not endanger political stability, effective control could be achieved by suggestive persuasion and mass involvement.

Modern Chinese society continues to operate through these categories. Mao has glorified the amateur-ideal and every Chinese is expected to perform the roles of a soldier, peasant, worker and administrator at the same time. The mechanical allegiance to the Marxist creed is discouraged and officials are encouraged to integrate with the masses. In the recent past, there was a campaign exhorting individuals to belong to the party ideologically and not just organizationally. Cadres are required to implement Maoist policies as well as embody and spread Maoist virtues. The most modern is the most faithful. Rebellions and 'revolutions' are justified only in the name of truer Maoism. Non-antagonistic contradictions are not tolerated.

In this situation, the safest route to socio-psychological security is to express unquestioned loyalty to the rule. A standard compensatory device to express this loyalty is the sudden enlightenment that often follows intense reading of Mao's works in China. The magical efficacy of the Red Book has opened up new channels of non-economic motivation, building up in this process an ideal image of selflessness, sacrifice and courage, combining the values of redness and expertise.

Since the ideal is postulated in terms of individual perfection, the failure is a reflection of personal deficiency. The pattern of social change in China exhibits a recurrent dilemma between changing men's minds and institutional reform. The former has been given an ascendent position in

the general theory of change. The targets of attack are not the institutions *per se* but the individual defaults of character. However, radical change cannot be introduced unless institutions are rearranged in consonance with the new function-and-situation-specific norms. In the initial stages, such reform is denounced as heterodox. The task of proper cultivation is considered to be an effective alternative to structural change. But the ideological fervour presupposes a number of organizational innovations. Ultimately, the mind is not perfected but the institutions are changed.

**T**his paradigm has continually been recreated in Chinese history. Mao's pattern is no exception. Its radical divergence from the Marxist theory of social change is explicable only in terms of its Chinese antecedents. The economic determinism of Marx has been transformed into a process of ideological determinism. In Maoist metaphysics, correct ideas are more important than correct economic relations. The former do not merely constitute a superstructure, an epiphenomenon emanating from the material conditions. Instead, Mao has idolized the immense power of human will and determination. Internal transformation of man is considered more important than external resource materials. Class conciliation and humanitarian redressal of grievances are ruled out because they represent ideological revisionism. Change in material realities comes presumably through new psychic transformations rather than through new power relations.

The Maoist perception of China's malaise is also rooted in the traditional frame of reference. The central problem is not exploitative institutions but exploitative human tendencies. For example, it is not the bureaucracy but bureaucratism which is considered the real culprit in China. Capitalism is not attacked as a system of economic relations but as a mental trait. Other common sins are revisionism, subjectivism and individualism. In each case, the

problem inheres in the minds of men.

The persistent concern of the Chinese leaders in creating effective bases of social change has been the eradication of the inborn and instinctive appeal of sins. On the other hand, no one is born red or remains red spontaneously. In order to resolve it, there is an unending cycle of meetings, discussions and study classes. The actual evidence of success is meagre. Each time reform has to be introduced through radical structural changes. In the end, it is not the 'new man' of the Maoist image but such institutional rearrangement that has brought about fundamental social changes in China.

This hypothesis can be further examined. The negative proof is available in data which reveal the failure of Maoist propaganda in producing a virtuous man. From the rectification campaigns to the Mao Study classes, the effort has been courageous, persistent and unproductive. The short-lived Hundred Flowers Movement exposed in 1957 the glaring divergence between the image and reality of ideal social behaviour. The documents of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution laid bare the long history of appalling sabotage of proletarian visions by revisionists and capitalist-roaders. The positive proof of the hypothesis is available in the extensive institutional reforms undertaken by the Chinese communists. A well-defined vertical structure with downward transmission of commands has been built up to prescribe and regulate normative requirements. In addition, alternative arrangements are made which have completely politicized traditional structures.

**T**he most crucial reform has centered round the family and clan organization. Rather than changing the minds of sons, husbands and parents, the internal organization of the family has been subjected to new institutional demands. The functions of the traditional family are gradually transferred to the work-groups, community dining halls and nur-

series. By granting equal rights to women in the laws relating to marriage, divorce and property, the traditional patriarchy is considerably weakened. Similarly, by involving youths in party work and according them commensurate status, the authoritarian parental control over the children is fully shattered.

The total effect of such changes has been the breaking-up of particularistic loyalties. This has been facilitated by destroying the legal sanctions, economic power and social responsibilities relative to various-lineage groups. In his relationship with the State, the individual no longer operates through his clan. However, while this new arrangement has broken his former dependence on kinship ties, it has not necessarily made him more virtuous. Thus, political cleavages in modern China are no more crystallized around the clan groupings but regional parochialism, favouritism and nepotism continues in different garbs. The Lienchiang papers captured in 1964 by the Chinese nationalist commandos disclosed only one facet of wide-spread cadre corruption in China. Such information is naturally hard to come by.

**I**n any case, it is sufficiently clear that the pattern of social change in China is neither Marxist nor West-inspired modernist. The categories of thought in which Maoist behaviour is expressed are rooted in China's socio-cultural tradition. From this analysis, one can move to the more substantive aspects of Mao's ideology. These are derived in turn from the concrete material conditions of China's present developmental stage. In no other underdeveloped country, are the constraints of social reality so closely reflected in economic planning. China's backwardness in terms of surplus manpower, agrarian economy, wide-spread poverty, extensive illiteracy and paucity of trained personnel has seriously conditioned Mao's blueprint of change.

In Maoist ideology these structural limits have been turned into

desired values of social transformation. The Maoist emphasis on converting every social institution as an agent of education and production reflects as much his personal vision as the structural needs of a backward society. It is only in the framework of this encounter that one may explain the phenomena of barefoot doctors, factory universities, labour-intensive production techniques, planned population transfers to rural areas, non-economic incentives to work, mass-line approach to governmental programmes, distrust of professional expertise, glorification of manual labour, uncoded and informal legal procedures, indoctrination campaigns and short-term investment-oriented education and research.

Mao's vision of modernity is still rooted in the confines of tradition. Intellectually, he has not been able to extricate himself from the constraints of Chinese backwardness. His efforts to ruralize China and proletarianize the Chinese are bold, romantic and absurd, no less than Gandhi's. The Yenan syndrome which haunts his conscience is a completely unrealistic framework of change, unmindful of modern requirements and unsophisticated to the point of being naive. Already, there are indications that Chinese leaders are moving beyond Mao's simplistic solutions. Although his 'quotations' still adorn pleas of change, the actual reform quite often supercedes his wishes. If the drift continues, he can be easily treated in future as a 'departed ancestor.'

There is no reason to believe that an explicit de-Maoization is necessary before China can be modernized. Maoism is sufficiently flexible to permit extensive revisionism. After all, before the cultural revolution, the arch-revisionist, Liu Shao-ch'i, could be comfortably and convincingly quoted together with Mao Tse-tung in support of similar views. A reinterpreted neo-Maoism would signify the dwindling of the revolutionary mystique and gradual erosion of the ideological purity.

This would not however come by the succession to power of a more moderate leadership after Mao. This is a variation on the myth of the probable future rationality of China which continues to cast its spell on numerous China-watchers. Change in China would not come by ideological moderation. However, when China is sufficiently modernized, the resultant institutional change would produce a concomitant change in the ideological rigidity.

At least in two areas the coming changes can be anticipated on the basis of the Chinese tradition. One is the probable appearance of apolitical pursuits, concerned with pure aesthetics and unsullied by strict demands of political conformity. In modern China, literature and the arts are completely politicized. As China becomes modern, culture is likely to be differentiated from politics and assume an independent and autonomous functional significance.

The second is the restoration of intellectual prestige. The current anti-intellectual stance would be weakened once the stability of the regime reduces the perception of threat from deviant behavior which is politically not damaging. In fact, a greater share in prosperity is likely to create a new class of mandarins who would enjoy the extra prerogatives of power and transmit the values of the regime.

In both these instances, the processes of social change would only further traditionalize China's quest for modernity. Notwithstanding the professed disregard of old China by Maoist visionaries, even revolutionary social change, sociologically, is not discontinuous. There is no modern society which is not traditional at the same time. As China attempts to change its society, the basic contradictions between the unadorned simplicity of Mao's vision and the complex demands of modernization would increasingly come to the fore. It is in this context that the success of Maoist ideology would initiate a process of its own disintegration.

# Party and organisation

GARGI DUTT

MAO told Edgar Snow in 1960 that, effectively, 800 people ruled China. These were the long marchers, the Yen-an veterans, those who were in the front line of the battle ground in the thirties and forties. They held crucial positions in the party organization and its ancillaries and some of them at least were there in the army too, as political commissars and in other similar positions. Then Mao struck at many of them, took a swipe at their entrenched positions, complaining about their inertia, settled bureaucracy and their insufficiency in propagating Mao's thought. The cultural revolution upset the old organizational structure of China and brought in new elements and some new concepts, but not neces-

sarily those which it had proclaimed and set out to place in a position of power.

The developments in the last two years and the contemporary scene call for a re-examination of the stated, and universally accepted, goals of the cultural revolution and the context in which this hurricane was unleashed. That an element of personal struggle, of power politics, of the conflict of personalities between Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi was perceptible even in the earlier stages of the cultural revolution was clear. But, the ideological tumult of the cultural revolution had hidden this aspect of the problem in China. Liu came to occupy the most important position in the

organizational structure of China. He and those others whose loyalty became suspect in Mao's eyes were dominating the party, the administration and other organizations which guided and controlled all activity in China. Liu was in virtual charge of the directing apparatus of the country. The old guard leadership at various levels had its grip tightly on the organization. Many of them, obviously, had links with Liu and in any case shared many of his ideas. Liu got his books published in larger and larger number whereas Mao's thought alone should have been the prescribed reading. Films were made in undisguised praise of Liu, putting Mao in the background. Liu took advantage of the 'economic difficulties' in the early sixties and projected himself large over the Chinese horizon.

Thus, the organizational tools which the Marxists-Leninists had used in all countries and which Mao himself used for the victory of the communist revolution and its subsequent consolidation did not seem to be available to Mao. The party and the organizational structure through which the State exercised its dictatorship on behalf of the proletariat had to be shaken to its roots and a new organizational structure toolled up in order to achieve Mao's objectives. It, therefore, became important to redefine and shift the source of authority in China. If authority flowed from the communist party, any attack on the party as such would be in the nature of a rebellion, an attack on the system and an attempt to subvert the State.

Consequently, it was the endeavour of the Maoists first to put Mao above the system, above the party, even above the State. There could be no Marxism-Leninism without Maoism and there could be no socialist State in China without the personal leadership of Mao. Those who were declared disloyal to Mao were, *ipso facto*, anti-State, anti-system and anti-communist. The system owed its legitimacy to Mao's approval, the

party owed its legitimacy to Mao's leadership and the ruling ideas of the State owed their legitimacy to conformity to Mao's thought. It was a novel situation for the communist world but there it was, for anything that departed from Mao's thought and did not have the sanction of the Leader could be discarded without overthrowing the State system. By establishing Mao's personal supremacy and ensuring the sanctity of his leadership, the struggle against the party and organizational structure could still be shown as a struggle within the system and, in fact, as a brave effort to defend and retain the purity of the system against the danger of degeneration and eventual subversion.

Mao then took the unprecedented step of establishing his own headquarters, known as the Maoist headquarters, and practically discarded the rest of the party structure. The momentous meeting of the Central Committee which took place in August 1966 to give *post facto* sanction to the launching of the cultural revolution was packed with irregular members from the Red Guard organisations in order to provide Mao his majority. Nobody could afford to raise a dissenting voice in that situation. In fact, the struggle against Party authoritarians had begun earlier with the public denunciation of P'eng Chen, the high-ranking Politbureau member and Mayor of Peking. After the Central Committee meeting, which was dominated by outsiders, only the Maoist headquarters functioned as the spokesmen of the communist party; the party structure and its wide-ranging organization became a major theatre of struggle and object of attack.

To bring down the edifice of the controlling network of the communist party at the central and provincial levels and in various government organs, public enterprises and the universities and other educational institutions, Mao appealed over the head of the party to the students and young Red Guards. These 'little generals', functioning under the

loose directions of the Maoist headquarters dominated by Chiang Ch'ing, Ch'en Po-ta and K'ang Shang, pulled down the existing organizational apparatus, more particularly in the towns and cities. China's vast and hitherto well-knit organizational apparatus fell into disarray. There was tension, tumult and conflict: the organizational homogeneity was disrupted. Any attempt at this time to restrain the students was branded as conservative, if not counter-revolutionary, and even the proletariat was admonished to follow the lead of the youthful Red Guards.

But, the Chairman had not anticipated that the instrument he had chosen to use against the established organisational forum was a petty bourgeois instrument, not a purer revolutionary organization. Not only was there a conflict between the Red Guards and the party establishment and between workers, peasants and students but also between the Red Guard groups themselves. Power was new to them and lacking the discipline of a trained party organization they engaged in such factional fighting that a serious situation developed. Growing intra-factional violence all over the country forced Mao to call the army in and to depend upon it as the mainstay of his power and purpose.

What had happened in China was unique. The Maoist revolution was being carried on without a Marxist-Leninist organization. Hitherto it was believed that socialist revolution was possible only through the vanguard agency of a Marxist-Leninist party but Mao was now trying to prove that at least one kind of a socialist revolution was attainable without the necessity of a Marxist-Leninist party apparatus. The Red Guards were not such a Marxist-Leninist apparatus. It was claimed—perhaps not without justification—that the army was 'personally' created by Mao, was indoctrinated in the thought of Mao and was loyal to him. But whether that made it a Marxist-Leninist poli-

tical revolutionary organization is highly arguable.

The army fanned out in the country, curbed violence, made its presence in each unit, department, factory, commune, university, school, and so on. The unity, the stability, the coherence and the management of production became the responsibility of the army.

Wherever necessary, the army dealt firmly with the factional quarrels among the Red Guards. In many cases the old party cadres were asked to get back to work, for they had come to acquire the managerial skills which newcomers lacked.

All the same, it seems fairly obvious that Mao was also conscious of the absence of political authority at the provincial and local levels and the fact that the army by itself could not provide a regular symbol of civil authority. Party functionaries had lost their authority. A new source of authority was created in the shape of revolutionary committees which were designed to be an alliance of army elements, rehabilitated or surviving old cadres and the new Red Guard leadership at various places.

The first Provincial Revolutionary Committee came in the summer of 1967 and the last in the autumn of 1968. This combined group was entrusted with the task of maintaining discipline, managing affairs and keeping the onward movement. But how much the temper in Peking had changed from the first phase of the cultural revolution was evident from the fact that the army leadership dominated the committees, and together with the old party cadres far outnumbered the Red Guard elements at the leadership level.

The revolutionary committees took considerable time to control the factional fighting and to bring about a new organizational homogeneity and normalcy. The old party cadres, having gone through the unexpected experience of facing heavy criticism and sharp struggle, were afraid to resume responsibility and frequently remained passive to avoid further

criticism. The organizational picture remained considerably confused until the army had brought peace and order everywhere.

The establishment of revolutionary committees did not resolve the basic dilemma. The revolutionary committees provided the new locus of power and authority, but how could a communist country remain without a communist party. Mao could not indefinitely use the army directly nor could he claim that the revolutionary committees were Marxist-Leninist political organizations substituting for a communist party. The revival and recreation of a communist party, therefore, became an urgent task. This could not mean simply the resuscitation of the old party branches and the renewal of the old party members. The new party had to be a purged party, in which the structure was maintained but the fillings were substituted. Mao picked up the thread of a tattered party fabric and began weaving it anew to make it into a new garment. It has taken nearly two years for the Maoist leadership to recreate the new party structure.

Experimental points were chosen for rebuilding the party branches and the whole process was staggered so as to exercise as much care and caution as was possible. There are three chief characteristics of the recreated party structure. The entire process was supervised by the army leadership at each level under the directions of the Maoist headquarters in Peking. It was the army under whose watchful eye the new party branches were established and which could reasonably be assumed to have had a leading voice in selecting the members. Although the supremacy of the party now began to be stressed once again in the mass media of information and propaganda, the army was unquestionably a notch higher and was in fact given the responsibility of rebuilding the party.

While defining the new ethos of the revived communist party,

Peking made it clear that the leadership of the party meant 'the leadership of Chairman Mao, the leadership of Mao Tse-tung's thought, the leadership of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line'. The kind of leadership that Mao wanted to emerge in the communist party was made clear by an editorial in the *Chinghai Daily* on 22nd January last year that the various organizations of the Party must 'establish a leading group for everyone loyal to Chairman Mao, to Mao Tse-tung's thought and to Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line'.

Peking was thus aiming at the establishment of a communist party which would be personally loyal to Mao and which would unquestioningly follow his instructions. That was the 'basic criterion' of judging the composition of leading groups and the most 'important key link in strengthening the unified leadership of the Party'. This has been the yardstick used for evaluating members of the communist party and in taking a decision whether or not they were to be allowed to retain their membership.

The second characteristic of the recreated communist party is that the most important positions are reserved for army men. Whether it is at the central level or at the provincial and the local levels, the army now occupies a fairly central position in the party organization. In the new Politbureau the trend that was apparent when the 9th Party Congress met in April 1969 has continued to be marked since then at all levels of the party organization. The delegates to the 9th Party Congress were themselves carefully selected. In the 21 member Politbureau set up by the 9th Party Congress, there were at least 9 persons from the armed forces.

The army's preponderance in the new Central Committee is even more conspicuous. Nearly a hundred of the 270-member Central Committee came from the armed forces. Since then, Provin-

cial Communist Party Committees have come up in 16 provinces and among the leadership elements in these committees over half are from the military, about 30 per cent from the old surviving cadres and not more than 10 per cent from what are referred to as the 'revolutionary masses'. Army elements thus effectively control the levers of power within the communist party.

The third characteristic of the new party structure is the injection of some fresh blood into it. Beginning from the Politbureau to the Central Committee and downwards to provincial, commune and factory committees, new faces have appeared, thereby radically changing the composition of the party. Many of these faces are from the army, but there are some from the 'masses'. The leadership in Peking had put forward two criteria for revitalizing the party structure; saving all those old cadres who could be saved through education and indoctrination and transfusing some fresh blood, a process in which the primary consideration was loyalty to Chairman Mao.

A rather ticklish problem that Peking faced in rebuilding the communist party was relationship with the revolutionary committees. The revolutionary committees had supplanted the party committees during the cultural revolution and had become the new organs of State power. Now the party was being brought back to life and the revolutionary committees were to'd to submit to the authority of the restructured communist party.

While there was no problem now of unalloyed obedience to Chairman Mao and his headquarters, the problem arose at the lower echelons. Wherever the composition of the local party committee and the revolutionary committee was largely the same, no particular difficulty arose and the functioning could be smooth. But where there were important differences in the composition of the two, there was a feeling of rivalry and competition for power. This was evident from the frequent

appeals by the leadership to the revolutionary committees to accept the authority and the superiority of the party committees and the stress that was now laid in Peking on the supremacy of the party.

While a new edifice of the communist party has thus been slowly and painfully reconstructed there is no real evidence of any fundamental institutional changes having been introduced as a result of weeding out of what were called the 'power holders' and 'capitalist roaders' in the party. Undoubtedly, a great deal of education and propaganda has centred around the question of pursuing a revolutionary proletarian line and commitment to continuing revolution, but no substantial structural changes have taken place.

Although material incentives came in for sharp criticism during the cultural revolution, the Peking leadership has been careful in preserving the principle of remuneration according to work. The basic structure of communes has remained intact, so has the managerial structure in factories and enterprises; particularly towards the peasants, the Maoist leadership continues to show caution. Peking has emphasised that the local functionaries 'must avoid and overcome ideological one-sidedness, eliminate interference from the Right or from the Left and correctly handle the relationship between the State, the collective and the individual'. At the same time, that concern must be shown for the interests of the State and the collective, 'you must also show regard for the interest for the peasants'. In fact, the local authorities have been advised that, so far as possible, an increase in the individual income of peasants should come every year, and that while the peasants were mobilized for revolution and production, their problems of personal interest and livelihood must not be overlooked. The fruits of production must be shared equitably between the State and the peasant.

Normalcy, order and emphasis on production are the chief

characteristics of the contemporary situation in China. Old organizational norms have been restored, the party is back into the scene and fresh mobilization is taking place for renewed effort at rapid economic development. But many important changes have taken place at the leadership level and the composition of the leading bodies in the country has witnessed considerable transformation. The emphasis has been switched back to order, discipline and conformity.

In fact, in all the important literature appearing now there is not only denunciation of 'rightist deviation' but an equal criticism of 'leftist distortions'. The excesses of the cultural revolution are being denounced as evidence of bourgeois factionalism and, significantly, both the left and the right deviations are being blamed on Liu Shao-chi and his supporters. Liu is accused of attempting to take the country towards capitalism; in the same breath Liu and his supporters are also being accused of trying to turn the country towards the suicidal leftist course. The advocacy of leftist courses during the cultural revolution are as much under fire as the rightist 'conspiracies' are.

Only minor changes have taken place in the institutional framework. The content of Mao's thought in education and propaganda has been greatly increased. China is again humming with economic activity. But, then, China was humming with such activity in 1965-66 also when Mao instituted the cultural revolution. The cultural revolution has resulted essentially in a purge of various persons at the leadership levels whom Mao did not regard as reliable followers of his wishes and ideas, chief among them being Liu Shao-chi with whom the struggle was not only political but also somewhat personal. After the purge, China is back to 'normal' with much the same policies and with caution, moderation and flexibility as the chief characteristic of the current situation.



# Security and defence

G. D. DESHINGKAR

MOST people in India today will agree with the proposition that the countries of Asia need to defend themselves against China. Only a few may concede that China, too, perceives its security to be threatened by others and that the Chinese armed forces have primarily a defensive role.

The images of a Chinese threat are based on an inadequate knowledge of ancient and modern China. For example, the glib generalization that China is an

inherently expansionist country ignores the fact that the Chinese dynasties were no more 'expansionist' than others elsewhere; that the neighbouring kingdoms—Tibet, Mongolia and Sinkiang—into which China expanded had themselves repeatedly encroached upon China and established dynasties there. It is also forgotten that after 1949, China has given up all claims to Outer Mongolia, Korea, Vietnam, Nepal, Burma, etc., which once formed parts of the Chinese empire. China has also resolved border disputes with most of its neighbours. The outstanding disputes with India and the Soviet Union do not make China *ipso facto* expansionist.

The argument that China must be aggressive because it is communist commits the fallacy of associating the spread of an ideology with military conquest and colonization by that State. China does proclaim itself to be a revolutionary nation and does advocate support for revolutions elsewhere. However, as Lin Piao has explained in his article 'Long Live the Victory of People's War', China cannot export revolutions; they must be made by the peoples of the various countries themselves. Chinese support is primarily moral and only in specified cases is marginal material aid given.

Another common assumption held in India is that China wants hegemony over Asia. What is not realized is that a major objective of China's foreign policy today is to prevent the division of the world into 'spheres of influence' belonging to the super powers. China refuses to accept their hegemony over other regions and also rejects the notion that Asia should be its own preserve. During the last 22 years China has never attempted to create a patron-client relationship with the smaller States of Asia. Even such communist States as North Korea and North Vietnam are fiercely independent of China, though they share the same ideology.

It may be argued that even if we leave aside the historical and

ideological prejudices, the very fact that China maintains the largest land army in the world and has moreover a fast growing nuclear weapons programme could indicate that China still has expansionist or aggressive designs. This argument is not valid. The possession of military power by itself does not constitute a threat. India, too, has a military machine which is far more powerful than those of the States around it. But India's military is developed expressly to preserve our national security. The Chinese power, too, is intended precisely for that purpose, for right from 1949 when the People's Republic was established, the Chinese Government has lived under a threat to its very existence.

The threat was not an imaginary one. It came in the form of an intervention by the United States in the Chinese civil war between the communists and the Kuomintang (KMT). The US Government not only helped the KMT with war material on the Chinese mainland but continued to prop up Chiang Kai-shek even after he retreated to the island of Taiwan. Moreover, after the outbreak of the Korean War, the US stationed its Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan straits to prevent the communists from annexing Taiwan. Further, during the Korean War, a nuclear attack on China was seriously considered by the US.

American policy towards China was put very bluntly by the then Assistant Secretary of State, Walter Robertson, as being aimed at the destruction of the communist government. To that end the US gave all diplomatic, economic and military support to the KMT regime and made threats to 'unleash' Chiang Kai-shek against the mainland. The US Seventh Fleet, though ostensibly stationed to separate the belligerents, co-operated with KMT forces in making commando raids against the mainland. US supplied U2 planes regularly violated Chinese airspace and the KMT airforce, supplied and trained by the US,

parachuted agents into China to carry out sabotage.

Taiwan was only one link in a whole chain of military installations of the SEATO and CENTO pacts which the US established to encircle China from east to west. Today, that chain consists of air and naval bases in South Korea, Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, the Philippines, South Vietnam, Thailand and the island of Guam. With the exception of those in Japan, all the other air-bases have long-range bombers equipped with nuclear weapons, bombers which are openly and obviously detailed for raids against China. US Navy ships and aircraft-carriers roam the seas from Korea to Malaysia and American naval bases serve a nuclear submarine fleet which carries Polaris and Poseidon missiles aimed at China. The base on Okinawa is stocked with chemical and bacteriological weapons in addition to nuclear weapons. In addition to all this fire-power, the US also maintains troops in South Korea and South Vietnam. Above all, that ultimate weapon, the nuclear-tipped Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) is targeted against China from silos in the US itself. Thus, the Chinese are constantly and brutally reminded of the fact that even a fraction of the destructive power thus deployed by the US is sufficient to bring about the end of the Chinese civilization.

The US justification for this deployment is that it was for the 'containment' of Sino-Soviet communist aggression. However, the US with its enormous intelligence gathering apparatus must surely have realized soon that the communist bloc was not monolithic and that China by itself was simply incapable of over-running all the countries on its periphery. A limited action of which China was capable did not need the kind of massive presence the US had built up over the years. And, yet, the US continued to reinforce its bases and ships with bigger and more destructive weapons. It continued to provoke China by sending manned and robot aircraft into the Chinese airspace.

The most recent such violation—the 404th—took place late in July 1971 even after President Nixon's plans to undertake a 'journey of peace' to Peking were announced.

The Chinese do not believe that President Nixon's forthcoming visit will reduce the overall American threat to China and its socialist allies in Asia. Bilateral problems between the US and China—Taiwan and the Seventh Fleet around it—may well be resolved. US troops in Indo-China may be withdrawn. Yet, the central fact of US hostility to communism in Asia will remain unaltered. The US will continue to be allied to regimes in Asia which are for their own reasons hostile to China; they may, despite President Nixon's Guam doctrine of 'nativizing' conflicts in Asia, drag the US willy nilly into a war with China.

Ironically, the US 'withdrawal from Asia' will actually increase the threat to China but from another quarter, e.g., Japan. China, for very obvious reasons, feels extremely threatened by a powerful Japan. Ever since 1952, it has watched the rearmament of Japan with increasing alarm. Japan, with US encouragement, has built up its armed forces, the 'Self-Defence Forces' in violation of its own Constitution. The *Zaitatsu* cartels, so active in launching wars against China, once again dominate the Japanese economy. Now that Japan is economically powerful, it is being encouraged to take over a part of the US 'containment' operations in the Pacific region. In preparation for this role, the Japanese armed forces are being greatly expanded. What is worse from the Chinese point of view, Japan has indicated that it may decide to build nuclear weapons. Further, Mr Sato, the Japanese Prime Minister has declared that South Korea and Taiwan are 'vital to the security of Japan', a declaration which China interprets as reflecting the old and feared Japanese concept of 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere'.

It was precisely against such a renewed threat from Japan that

China had signed a 30 year defence treaty with the Soviet Union in 1950. However, the ideological differences between China and the Soviet Union which began in 1956 have reduced the treaty to a dead-letter. Worse still, the ideological dispute has now become so intense that the Soviet Union has itself become a threat to China's security.

The Soviet threat, as China sees it, is different from but just as grave as that posed by the US. It has an ideological component which, being a 'deviation' from Marxism-Leninism is feared to be a corrupting influence on the Chinese Communist Party. Soviet 'revisionism' threatens the future of the Chinese revolution and of the type of world revolution that China would like to see come about, for the Soviet Union has already abandoned revolution at home and abroad; in fact, it has joined the U.S. in 'opposing revolution and opposing China'. Secondly, the Soviet Union with its 'social imperialist' ambitions seeks to oust from power what it calls the 'Maoist clique' which is its rival for the leadership of the international communist movement. Lastly, China and the Soviet Union have border problems which have already led to armed clashes between them.

These border disputes are not new; they are a left-over from the 19th century Russian expansion towards the Far East. The Chinese Government allowed them to lie frozen in the larger interests of Sino-Soviet friendship. However, as the ideological dispute began to affect State-to-State relations, the border dispute gradually became a part of the total hostility between the two countries.

The Sino-Soviet border in the West runs through the middle of areas inhabited by minority nationalities. According to the Chinese account, the Soviet Union, in the early 1960s, engineered disaffection among these minorities and 'enticed' thousands of Kazaks and Uighers to cross over to the

Soviet side. Since that time, Soviet propaganda has continued to encourage the nationalist and hence secessionist sentiments among the minorities. China views this as a grave threat to its national and territorial integrity.

Inevitably, in this tense atmosphere, a large number of armed clashes have taken place along the entire Sino-Soviet border; the Ussuri River clash was the most serious. China considers these clashes to be a part of Soviet pressure tactics designed to influence the outcome of the ideological struggle between Chairman Mao and his opponents within China. The Soviet threat is, therefore, a double-edged one; it covets Chinese territory and also threatens its political system.

The Soviet Union today has stationed a major proportion of its armed forces along the border with China. According to some reports, as many as one million troops reinforced with powerful artillery, aircraft and rockets—possibly armed with nuclear weapons—have been deployed in depth against China. 'Unofficial' Soviet propaganda against China on 'Radio Peace and Progress' openly supported the Liu Shao-ch'i faction during the Cultural Revolution and called for the overthrow of the 'Mao clique'. The same radio, at the height of the Ussuri River clash reminded China of Soviet nuclear might and this was interpreted by China as a 'naked threat'. Moreover, the fact that the Soviet Union has transferred some troops from its western front facing the NATO forces to the eastern front is, to China, a proof of Soviet-American collusion aimed at revolutionary countries. China expects that, despite the reduction in tension which followed Premier Kosygin's visit to Peking—the Sino-Soviet talks remain deadlocked—and such relaxation as may result from Nixon's visit, Soviet-American encirclement of China will continue.

China's perception of its global environment is thus one of being

threatened from all sides by hostile forces armed with weapons of incalculable destruction. This threat is seen to emanate from three sources: the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan. It is this perception which has shaped the Chinese military doctrine which is built around the central objective of defending the Chinese nation and the Maoist political system from external and internal threats. The size, organization, equipment and the deployment of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) clearly reflects this defensive orientation.

The PLA, including its naval and airforce wings, has a strength of 2.78 million in contrast to the US forces numbering 3.16 million and the Soviet forces totalling 3.30 million. These figures are even more revealing in relation to the populations of these countries. In the US, the military absorbs 8.5 per cent of its men of military age; in the Soviet Union the proportion is 6.9 per cent. However, in China, supposedly the most 'militarized society' in the world, only 1.8 per cent of its young men are to be found in the regular army. In terms of the money spent on the armed forces, including the nuclear weapons programmes, all three devote approximately 8 per cent of their gross national product for this purpose.

A nation's armed forces need to have an overall strategy which identifies the major enemies, the type of threat and selects the theatre of operations, the type of operations and the armaments needed for them. The Chinese PLA's basic strategy is to 'drown the enemy in a sea of people's war', i.e., a protracted guerilla war, on the Chinese mainland. The theory is that the enemies, even if they launch massive attacks from the air—this scenario does not include total destruction by nuclear weapons—cannot subjugate China without fighting on the land and occupying the whole of it. Moreover, the best location to fight the enemy is at the end of his supply line and on one's own territory; the whole population

can then be mobilized to 'drown' the enemy. Based on these principles, China has concentrated the major proportion of its military effort on building up a land army of 2.45 men which is considerably bigger than its American and Soviet counterparts.

The large size of the Chinese army is also a function of many factors which are peculiar to China. The PLA is very much a political army; in addition to its normal soldierly duties, the PLA engages in agricultural and industrial production, propaganda work and construction work. Since it lacks mobility—absence of transport aircraft, shortage of motorized transportation and of petroleum products, poor road and railway network etc.—each army region must be relatively self-sufficient; PLA troops, unlike those of the American or Soviet army, cannot be transferred rapidly from one sector to another for reinforcement.

Since China must maintain troops on many fronts—in Fukien against the KMT, along the 4000 miles long Sino-Soviet frontier, in Tibet and on the Vietnamese border—the PLA by itself cannot defend a sector effectively. The regular army is, therefore, reinforced by a gigantic People's Militia (perhaps numbering 20 million). Both the PLA as well as the militia undergo intensive ideological indoctrination so that in the event of a massive nuclear attack on China which destroys the Central Government, the PLA-militia combination can carry on the war on their own.

The PLA's strategy of protracted guerilla war cannot be applied in reverse, i.e., for offensive wars fought on foreign territories. Moreover, its relative immobility limits its capacity to undertake actions beyond the borders of China. As witnessed in 1962, it is capable of executing swift and limited actions along the borders but in terms of strategy, training, weaponry, etc., it is not equipped to play the role of an army of occupation. The People's Militia

force, cannot obviously be deployed in foreign countries; indeed, it would be difficult to deploy it outside its own provinces.

The PLA airforce is primarily assigned to provide support to the army in battle and to engage enemy bombers on the Chinese mainland. At present it has a strength of approximately 3500 aircraft mostly of old Soviet design but improved versions are now being manufactured in China. Of the existing strength, the greater proportion is made up of fighters and fighter-bombers with a relatively short range of operations. New additions to the airforce as well as the research and development (R and D) programme also appear to stress the importance of the fighter aircraft. So far as is known, China is not developing a long-range bomber force; its Tu-16 jet bomber has a range of only 1650 miles with a normal payload; moreover, China has not developed mid-air refuelling techniques. The Chinese airforce is, thus, neither intended for, nor capable of, operating far beyond the Chinese borders.

The PLA navy at present consists of about 870 surface ships and about 33 submarines, both varieties being of old and obsolete Soviet designs. However, according to the latest *Jane's Fighting Ships*, China is building three submarines capable of launching nuclear missiles. Even so, the overall composition of the PLA Navy is such that it is not capable of—perhaps, not intended for—sea-warfare beyond a few miles off the Chinese coast. It has no aircraft carriers, no large fleets of destroyers or submarines nor any troop-carriers. The Chinese coast line is so enormously long that even for coastal defence it needs a navy several times its present size.

However, perhaps because the overall Chinese defence strategy is based on land-warfare, the navy seems to have the lowest priority among the services. The result is that today, even if all other conditions were to be favourable, the PLA Navy will find it difficult to

mount an invasion of Taiwan; an attack on Japan, the Philippines or Indonesia is out of the question. Reports about the already threatening presence of the Chinese navy in the Indian Ocean should, therefore, be treated with extreme skepticism.

The Chinese military doctrine for its nuclear force is based on the concept of strategic deterrence. Since China perceives the threat of total destruction from two major adversaries, the US and the Soviet Union, its nuclear weapons programme is geared to the production of an ICBM capability which will bring significant destruction on the heartlands of those two powers. The nuclear missile launching submarines are most probably being developed for the same purpose. So far, only one prototype of an ICBM appears to have been tested over a reduced range within China. It is expected that by mid 1975, China will be able to deploy between 10 and 25 ICBMs; even if a few of them can survive an enemy attack—there are good chances of that—they can cause serious damage to the enemy.

The Chinese ICBMs, even when operational, will not constitute an offensive threat. A Chinese 'pre-emptive' nuclear attack against the super powers is clearly impossible on military grounds alone. As late starters, no matter how hard the Chinese may try, they will never be able to catch up with the super powers either in quantity or technological quality. Moreover, if China were to launch an attack on either of its adversaries, each one of them individually has the capacity to survive that attack and launch a massive 'second strike' on China causing total devastation. For its own physical survival, China must not provoke its enemies.

The fear of Chinese 'nuclear blackmail' against its non-nuclear neighbours is equally unfounded. Firstly, had China built its nuclear arsenal for use against the Asian countries, it would have given priority to the development of

bombers, medium-range (MRBM) and intermediate-range (IRBM) ballistic missiles. However, all available evidence indicates that it is bypassing manned bombers, MRBMs and IRBMs and aiming straight at the ICBMs, which can be used only against the United States and the Soviet Union, as a strategic deterrent. Secondly, a 'first-strike' by any power against a non-nuclear State carries the grave risk of escalation in which the super powers will be forced to act. Thirdly, a nuclear attack is politically suicidal. It will brand China as an imperialist *par excellence* and forever ruin its claims to being the centre of anti-imperialist revolutions.

It needs to be emphasized again and again that in analysing Chinese policies one must not lose sight of their political objectives. China today is, without doubt, a potential super power. Yet, it has categorically renounced that status in order to attain the political objective of building up a broad united front of small but independent States against super power hegemony. Recently, it turned down a Soviet invitation to join the nuclear club and declared that it would not participate in any great power conference 'behind the backs of the non-nuclear States'. It would be cynical to dismiss such gestures as mere propaganda which conceals naked great power ambitions.

China is indeed committed to the goal of a world revolution, but the notion that it can load revolutions into PLA tanks and nuclear missiles should be recognized for what it is, namely, a cold-war myth of a bygone era. We must learn to separate the two issues of the spread of a revolutionary ideology by China and Chinese territorial-military aggression. It is perfectly natural for States which profess the ideals of liberal democracy to feel threatened by Chinese communism but it would be futile to believe that the ideological threat can be 'contained' by arming to the teeth against a hypothetical Chinese attack.

# The changed context

V P. DUTT

THE changing fortunes of India-China relations cannot be divorced from the transformation that has taken place in the last decade or so and must be analysed in the context of the transfiguration of international relations. Consequently and inevitably, noticeable changes have occurred in Peking's international stance. The first significant change in Chinese attitude in international relations is the realization in Peking that incivility in diplomatic relations

was not coterminous with militancy. The image of China was not helped by cursing and beating foreign diplomats. By being civil and normal, Peking could win more friends and influence more people than by a display of pique and ill humour against all and sundry.

The new phase in Chinese policy is characterized by the observance of normal etiquettes and codes of conduct in international rela-

tions. The windfall from such an approach, China has seen for herself, is swift and substantial. Nixon is taking a trip to Peking. More and more countries are sending feelers to Peking in order to come to grips with this reality. They are no longer turned away by the abuse and the noise and din of the Red Guards.

**T**he invitation to Nixon to come to Peking is only one dramatic indication of the new Chinese desire to establish normal relations with other countries. In another significant statement, contained in Peking's message to the Soviet Union on the 53rd anniversary of the October Revolution, the Chinese leadership said that it was prepared to maintain and develop normal State relations with Moscow on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

It should at the same time be understood that civility in diplomatic conduct "was no longer tantamount to friendship. The politer diplomatic notes, the more relaxed behaviour of the Chinese diplomats and Peking's new conformity to well-understood diplomatic norms and practices did not indicate that China had dropped its enmities and forgotten its grievances. Only, the objectives would now be pursued with more sophistication.

However, there can be no doubt that China does face a new situation and that the old policies would accord ill with the requirements of the new situation. In fact, China has suddenly and only recently caught up with the logic of its problems and its situation. What may be surprising, if not bemusing, is that the new sobriety, the new subtlety and the new sophistication have come in the wake of the cultural revolution whose first phase was marked by violence and extremist postures. Whether the second phase was premeditated or whether the change is the result of hard and harsh experience, it is difficult to say.

China could not continue to be the odd man out with the acqui-

sition of nuclear weapons and accretion in political and economic strength. Even the role of half a super power is incommensurate with political volatility and waywardness. The new equation between Washington, Moscow and Peking obliges Peking as much as the other two to ensure stability of relationship with third countries and to introduce an element of uncertainty in relations with the other two super powers. Whatever may be the propaganda against US-USSR collusion, Peking can no more afford to drive the other two super powers into each other's arms against China as any of the other two can to bring about an alliance hostile to itself.

The severe denunciation of the Soviet Union notwithstanding, Peking does not terminate the talks on the border problem and, in fact, has just signed a trade agreement with Moscow. The tantalising prospects of talks with the United States are also dangled before Washington. Neither Moscow nor Washington is certain how far Peking would be forthcoming and both remain hopeful of a thaw.

**E**qually, Peking remains worried and uncertain about the state of relations between its rival super powers. With greater finesse the Chinese are pinpointing the fears among the smaller countries of possible domination by a 'directoriate' of the super powers. If 'world domination' by the two super powers has to be shattered, Peking has gradually come to realize that it cannot afford to stew in its own juice. It has to reach out to other countries and extend its sphere of friendship, neutralize as many countries as possible and function as a normal big power. From Chile to Libya to Zambia, Peking is engaged in active diplomacy now to meet this developing situation.

The component of national interests in Chinese foreign policy has, if anything, got further intensified. Even in Peking's militancy, the shadow of national interests is a long one and now this shadow

is further lengthening. The demands of the vital, fundamental and multi-dimensional conflict with the Soviet Union have brought home in Peking the awareness of the elementary principle that you cannot fight too many enemies at one time. The call for revolution has, consequently, become highly selective and is closely related to the insistent obligations of national interests.

**T**he some compulsion has led Peking to respond to US overtures and to take a decisive step in breaking the ice in the relations with Washington. Peking aimed at a reorganization of the world which would enable it to be one of the star players, and both Peking and Washington would use their new opening to apply pressure on the Soviet Union. The fundamental fact of international relations today is the continued rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.

For the United States, the Soviet Union was rapidly becoming too powerful, extending its influence in West Asia, South-east Asia, the Indian Ocean and other regions of the world. It was partly with an eye to curbing the growing power of the Soviet Union and imposing a new pressure on it that Washington has taken such a big step towards a detente with Peking, calculated to compel the Soviets to revise their stand on other important issues in which Washington and Moscow were intimately involved. For Peking the 'principal contradiction' was with the Soviet Union and, therefore, the defreezing of relations with the United States allowed them a whole new vista for manoeuvre and pressure and to foreclose the possibility of the other two ganging up against China.

Finally, the emergence of Japan has radically transformed the balance in Asia and Peking has shown an alarmed awareness of it. A country whose gross national product was next only to the United States and the Soviet Union was too important to be ignored by any big power. Japan's

tremendous economic power was already making itself felt in South-east Asia and its expanding political power is a factor to be reckoned with by Peking and other big powers. Japan's military spending has increased sharply over the years and Peking's concern over a remilitarized Japan, politically and economically strong, is obvious.

If the above framework is accepted as valid and relevant as determining factors behind Peking's foreign policy, then the future of relations between India and China could be considered in the context of this transformation of the Asian and international situation. The major concerns of Chinese foreign policy had changed. The order of priorities of enemies was no longer the same. In 1962 it was USA-USSR-India-Yugoslavia; now the new classification could run as USSR-Japan. In 1960 Peking was considerably obsessed with India; in 1970 the quarrel with India was no longer relevant to the issues China was facing. In 1960 the course of foreign policy of the two countries was set in totally opposite directions, with a very leftward swing in Chinese internal and external policies and a slightly rightward trend in India; in 1970 the divergence was less prominent, with a somewhat rightward movement in China and a leftward thrust in India.

It is reasonable to conclude that in the new circumstances that obtained, China should take a second look at its earlier stance and find some advantage in defusing the conflict with India and normalizing relations with this country. And this was precisely what appeared to be happening until March this year.

The toning down of the tension with India and establishment of relations at an even keel could be politically valuable for China in its more basic conflict with the Soviet Union, the problems with the United States and the emerging confrontation with Japan. China had made cautious gestures

in this regard. The stridency of the past propaganda against India had been somewhat softened. Even the Naxalite violence in Calcutta and elsewhere was not attracting the prominence that was earlier reserved for it. The Chinese comment on the Lusaka Conference of non-aligned countries had been conspicuously silent on the role of India (and equally conspicuously praised Yugoslavia), whereas in 1961 Peking held India and Yugoslavia the chief villains at the Belgrade Conference of the non-aligned countries. Chinese interest in stabilizing relations with India seemed to have revived somewhat.

The issues between India and China could not be resolved so speedily. It was easier for Peking to negotiate the border with Nepal and Burma than to resolve the border dispute with India. Both were big countries, proud and nationalistic. A whole complex of political and territorial questions were involved and the process of readjustment would be necessarily prolonged and difficult. But a beginning was both feasible and practical at this juncture.

The new sophistication in Chinese policies could be discerned from the attitude towards India and Pakistan last year. President Yahya Khan was given the biggest ever reception to a foreign dignitary and he was presented with a loan of 100 crores for Pakistan's Fourth Five Year Plan but the joint communique of Chou and Yahya, even though calling for self-determination for Kashmir, was bereft of the usual denunciations of India. Peking seemed to be aiming at a policy of simultaneous friendship with Pakistan and normalization of relations with India.

The thrust of this policy would be in favour of Pakistan—for quite some time at least. But once the process of readjustment started, it was bound to have an impact on the total attitude of the two countries. Neither the present Sino-Indian relationship nor the present Sino-Pak, nor even the present

Indo-Pak relationship could remain static.

This slow and gradual movement towards a readjustment of the tense relations between India and China over the last decade was suddenly interrupted by the events in East Bengal and the subsequent developments on the Sino-US-Pak front. The brutal repression let loose by the West Pakistani military regime in East Bengal and the emergence of Bangla Desh suddenly found China and India ranged on opposite sides in a sensitive area. They also revealed, as if in a flash, Peking's primary requirement to keep Pakistan propped up as a counter-weight to India. Peking had not reappraised its policies with regard to the Indo-Pak sub-continent so fundamentally as to be prepared for a diminution in the power of Pakistan. And for Peking, too, Pakistan was synonymous with Islamabad and the rulers there.

Denied and denuded of the resources and man power of East Bengal, West Pakistan's credibility as a counter-weight to India would be negligible. East Bengal constituted the majority of Pakistan's population and its major foreign exchange earner. Shorn of East Bengal, West Pakistan could hardly be taken seriously as a balancing factor against India. Peking did not find it a pleasant prospect that India should emerge as the only major power in South Asia as a result of recent developments.

Moreover, if Bangla Desh were to become established as an independent country, it would have the closest relations with India and its similarity of outlook and system of government with that of India would be marked. Bangla Desh would also be a non-aligned, democratic, secular State on the pattern of India. Peking did not consider these developments as furthering its own interests.

Peking propounded two elements in its policy towards the happenings in Bangla Desh. In a message to General Yahya Khan,



the Chinese Prime Minister, Chou En-lai said, 'In our opinion, the unification of Pakistan and the unity of the people of East and West Pakistan are basic guarantees for Pakistan to attain prosperity and strength.' Thus Peking ruled out support for the cause of Bangla Desh as it militated against the 'unity' of Pakistan, the maintenance of which was Peking's major objective. Peking's concern about Pakistan's unification—in sharp contrast to its attitude towards the conflict in Biafra where it did not support the Nigerian quest for unification—can only be explained in the context of its needs *vis-a-vis* India.

**T**he second element in Peking's policy also flows from the continuing rigidity in relations with India. In the same message, Chou En-lai said: 'Of late we have noted that the Indian Government has been carrying out gross interference in internal affairs of Pakistan by exploiting the internal problems of your country. And the Soviet Union and the United States are doing the same one after the other. . . The Chinese Government holds that what is happening in Pakistan at present is purely an internal affair of Pakistan, which can only be settled by the Pakistan people themselves and which brooks no foreign interference whatsoever. Your Excellency may rest assured that should Indian expansionists dare to launch aggression against Pakistan, the Chinese Government will, as always, firmly support the Pakistan Government and people in their just struggle to safeguard the State's sovereignty and national independence'. This was an ill-concealed threat to India to desist from overt support to Bangla Desh. It also made amply clear that if Pakistan were to engage in armed conflict with India, it could count on Peking's sympathy and support. Chou En-lai naturally left the nature and extent of this support open but the fact of the availability of this support was not left in doubt.

This was one part of the scenario in which recent developments in

Asia have taken place. The other part is the move towards Sino-U.S. detente and West Pakistan's attempt to take advantage of it in relation to India. The proposal for a dialogue at the summit between the United States and China was largely directed against the Soviet Union, but it also left India outflanked. With the opening towards Washington, Mao had pushed the process of a grand reorganization of the world. The old alignments fell to pieces and the whole concept of alignment, with its military and bloc implications, belonged to a bygone era. New combinations, equations and adjustments were arising in a situation in which thinking and terminology relevant to the previous era had no place.

The Soviets were acutely aware of the meaning of the new opening between Washington and Peking. The set-back in West Asia was followed by the threatened isolation in South and South-east Asia. Apart from India, they had hardly any other important friend in Asia. Pakistan was too busy reaping the harvest of the Sino-U.S. opening to conform to Soviet hopes and calculations. Whatever the expectations in Moscow about taking both Islamabad and New Delhi along in meeting the challenges in Asia from Peking and Washington, recent events had made short shrift of that policy.

**I**ndia too faced an extremely grave and nasty situation. Pakistan threatened war to forestall Indian assistance to the freedom fighters in Bangla Desh and any Indian effort to relieve its own colossal burden of the refugees. Pakistan expected that in case of war, China would make suitable threatening noises against India and at the same time the United States would activate international machinery to intercede and make the present situation more or less permanent.

Pakistan not only transferred its own problems on to India and imposed a massive burden on this country, but also threatened a

general war against India, in case India took any appropriate steps with regard to the situation in Bangla Desh. Pakistan's strategy was patent. It first engaged in murder and terror in East Bengal and drove out millions of people of East Bengal into India. During this period it cried wolf at any suggestion of third parties restraining Pakistan from committing genocide in East Bengal in the name of non-interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan.

**H**aving killed a quarter of a million people and having driven out another seven million inhabitants of East Bengal, the generals in Islamabad suddenly changed their tune and conveyed the impression abroad that Pakistan would welcome international effort in meeting the problems of the Indo-Pak sub-continent. They now openly lobbied for placing U.N. observers on the border of India and Pakistan. The game obviously was to use the presence of observers to dampen the growing power of the Mukti Fauj in Bangla Desh and to compel India to continue to bear the burden of refugees. Pakistan was using its friendship with China and the United States to threaten India with dire consequences for India's support to the cause of Bangla Desh.

The U.S. policy towards India has been conditioned by its policy towards the Indo-Pak sub-continent. This policy has been to keep a balance between India and Pakistan with the balance somewhat tilted towards Pakistan. Pakistan was first a military ally, then a lever of pressure against India, and now additionally a friendly emissary between Washington and Peking.

What was even more alarming for India was that the United States Government came out openly on the side of West Pakistan in the recent developments. The United States press carried harrowing tales of the happenings in East Bengal and many Senators and Congressmen asked for a halt to the murder in Bangla Desh but the Administration not only refus-

ed to deplore the West Pakistani military junta's policy of genocide in Bangla Desh but gave every indication of continuing economic and military support. It is this, in addition to China's friendship, which encouraged Pakistan to threaten India with war. In fact more than any other factor, the United States policy forced India to secure its flanks, reduce the threat to its political, economic and territorial integrity and conclude the peace treaty with the Soviet Union.

Obviously, relations between India and China have again got snarled up in developments in South Asia and around the world. Peking is not going to be pleasant over the Indo-Soviet treaty, although after having pledged such open support to Islamabad, Peking could have hardly expected India to leave itself so vulnerable to dual pressure from Pakistan and China. If we had taken an initiative last year, conditions were more propitious for a more positive response from Peking. Now things have become more complicated and the difficulties have increased.

**N**ormalization of relations with China cannot be the end all of India's foreign policy. It is highly desirable but can only come about under suitable conditions and through a suitable modification in China's policy too. Those whose entire framework of reference for India's foreign policy is normalization with Peking betray a fixation which ignores totally the present realities. To scuttle existing friendships for the sake of distant and elusive openings is a disastrous course of action, just as to let existing friendships preclude the effort to obtain new openings in foreign policy would not be a far sighted course of policy.

However, there are three aspects of the new situation which we in India might keep in mind. In the first instance, India is no longer one of the active factors in the Chinese moves towards the United States. At one time China reacted furiously because

India seemed to stand in the way of the Chinese line being adopted by the Afro-Asian countries. But the lesson could have gone home that active hostility against India would not facilitate their effective functioning in the Afro-Asian community. China's need for such functioning has not totally disappeared. Both these factors could gradually reactivate the process of adjustment between the two countries.

**T**he third aspect of the present situation is related to the strength that India acquires to meet the mounting challenges. The whole point of the initiative taken by India in response to the developing situation named could be lost if India were to become passive and complacent. India must not only acquire gradually the strength of a major country but must also function as one in South-east Asia, Africa and Latin America. A strong, independent India would hasten the process of realistic reappraisal in Peking and elsewhere. Today, international relations are in a melting pot. New political equations are in the offing. India must develop independent new equations all over the world, but first of all with Asia. This would act as a corrective to the present imbalance in Asia.

In the meantime, we can keep probing Peking and pressing the point that normal, friendly relations would be of mutual advantage, not the least for Peking also. We cannot let Peking wield a veto over our friendship with the Soviet Union and other countries of the world, but at the same time we have no intention of joining or sponsoring anti-China alliances, and if Peking corrects the distortion in its own policy towards this sub-continent the road is clear for readjustment. When the reality of Bangla Desh becomes established and vigorous diplomacy on the part of India underlines her independence and her continuing importance, the reappraisal in Peking might become more qualitative, ushering in a new phase in India-China relations.

# Books

**CHINA'S CULTURAL REVOLUTION** by V. P. Dutt and Gargi Dutt. Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1970.

It is true that China is no longer a 'riddle wrapped in an enigma', (a phrase which the late Winston Churchill used for the Soviet Union), so far as European and American scholarship is concerned but in India we are yet to raise a crop of China specialists. Only a beginning has been made in this direction. The dearth of sound scholarship on China in our country is felt because the performance of South Block has been disappointing.

The Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was the most momentous event in post-1949 China. No communist country in the world had

yet experienced anything like an upheaval of this kind. In assessing the causes and the contents of the cultural revolution, broadly speaking, the scholars on China are divided into two schools of opinion. One considers ideological differences as the main cause and focus while the other is of the opinion that non-ideological considerations such as the power struggle, the ambitions of a leader, etc., were the more important causes of the drama.

The Dutt's belong to the second category. It is not to suggest that the authors under-rate the role of ideas and ideology in China. But the onus of their reasoning is that factional power struggle at the highest echelons of the leadership, Mao's mental make-up and his craze for personal glory were the

major reasons behind the cultural revolution. To quote the authors, 'Mao's personality perhaps, an obsessive concern of a dying old man with the future of his name in history and of his country are equally important' (p. 2). On the same page the authors make a reference to the 'megalomaniac visions or hallucinations of a leader—his egotism and egocentricity.'

In this volume, the authors have put special emphasis on the role that the PLA has played in recent years in China. Even before the cultural revolution, as the authors put it, the army was undergoing a process of 'Maoization' under the leadership of Defence Minister Lin Piao. After he replaced P'eng Teh-huai in 1969 Lin Piao had been steadily rebuilding the army for a political role. A nationwide campaign was launched asking people to 'Learn from the PLA'. Between 1962-64 Mao and Lin Piao conducted a 'mini' cultural revolution in China's armed forces.

According to the authors, the support that Mao got from the PLA was the decisive factor in the cultural revolution. In January 1967, the army intervened in the movement after rival Red Guard factions had started fighting with each other. Such clashes took place in a number of places requiring the intervention by the army. During this period it appeared as if China was being ruled by the army. It is true that the PLA played a crucial role during the cultural revolution, but it was a PLA operating under the command of the Maoist section of the party leadership. Given the revolutionary tradition and the political character of the PLA it could not work like any other army.

The Chinese Cultural Revolution claimed quite a heavy toll (not physical liquidation, Mao constantly repeated 'touch' their souls and not their body): Liu Shao-chi, Teng hsiao-P'ing, Wu Han, Teng To, P'eng Ch'en, Ho Lung, Chu Teh and many other lesser known figures. An impressive count indeed! What were the 'crimes' of all those people? Their main 'crime' was of course that they doubted Mao's wisdom. They argued for other variables and options in China's domestic as well as foreign policies.

Take the case of Liu Shao-chi for example. The Maoists 'catalogued' the 'crimes' of Liu and 'proved' that this 'China's Khrushchev' was consistently 'revisionist' and 'anti-party' since his entry into the Chinese Communist movement. That he 'wormed' his way into the party to oppose Marxism-Leninism. Such a reasoning cannot carry conviction even with a casual student of China's history and politics. It is more likely, as the authors argue, that Liu was a protagonist of a more moderate and realistic set of policies. But P'eng Chen who had the reputation of being a hard liner was also axed. This brings up the importance of the non-ideological factors.

According to the authors, Mao was in a minority in the party and he violated the principle of 'Demo-

cratic Centralism'. Two main causes lead to such thinking. Firstly, the way the Central Committee and its Plenum were packed by the 'special invitees' and 'revolutionary representatives' was a violation of party rules. Secondly, that teenagers and school children should drag senior party comrades of 45 years standing service to the party and should tell them that they were 'renegades' and 'conspirators' was too obvious a violation of the norms of Democratic Centralism. One may, however, add a corrective here. What happens if a section of senior leadership of the party who wield power and prestige go astray? Did not Gandhi feel the same about the Congress in 1947? The only difference between Mao and Gandhi here was that the former made an attempt (bold and risky) to rectify it while the latter died in agony.

The authors make a distinction between Mao before the 1960s and Mao after the 1960s. To quote the authors, 'Mao of the thirties and forties was not the same as the Mao of present times, although inevitably many strands of thought and action remain constant. Mao of the thirties was a great realist, a supreme strategist, a unique statesman and a shrewd politician. He had a firm grip over the Chinese situation and an uncanny knack of anticipating developments. Mao of the post-fifties is more and more divorced from realities and more and more irrational and vain-glorious, subjective and isolated, intolerant and inflexible' (p. 243).

I think that this division of Mao into good and bad, rational and irrational on the basis of periodization, though interesting, is not convincing. After all, it is not only from the post-fifties that Mao started emphasizing the subjective will of man but the entire history of the CCP and the vicissitudes through which it passed and triumphed is an eloquent testimony of this. After the 1960s, an additional factor which has strengthened his belief in the supremacy of man and his subjective will is the negative example of the Soviet Union. The wide gulf between the 'base' and the 'super-structure' in the Soviet Union acted as an eye opener for Mao. Questions like, 'Where is the socialist man in the Soviet Union in spite of the socialist material base' became extremely pertinent for Mao. Hence the Chinese Cultural Revolution must be seen in the context of ideological debate between the Soviet Union and China. That China should not go the Soviet way continues to be the main concern of Mao.

K. R. Sharma

**PARTY LEADERSHIP AND REVOLUTIONARY POWER IN CHINA.** John Wilson Lewis (Ed.)  
London: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

This volume deals with the cultural revolution in China in a comprehensive perspective. Some articles refer to the inner party struggles in the history of the CCP. Others discuss important political issues

arising in the process of the socialist construction of China. The basic argument that runs through the entire book is that Mao waged the cultural revolution to destroy the party and consolidate his own position of authority in China. Clearly the book is more sympathetic to Liu Shao Chi than to Mao.

Wilber in his article explains two ingredients of the early orientation of the CCP—ideational and human. The major ideational components of the party as a system were the vision, the myth, the norms of the party life and the conceptualised structure. After Mao appeared on the scene, new political elements characterised the party. Dorrill in his article suggests that there were persistent efforts to build up Mao's image. Mao achieved legitimacy through the Cheng-feng campaign of 1942-44 in which past failures were attributed to Mao's absence from leadership and all the successes of the CCP are attributed to Mao's leadership.

Schwartz, Schram, Schapiro, Lewis and Bridgham in their articles use the totalitarian approach in explaining the issues involved in the cultural revolution. According to them, Mao initiated the cultural revolution as a device to wreck the party over which he had no control. Schapiro and Lewis describe the Maoist political line as a fuhrerist line and Liu Shao Chi's line as a Bolshevik line. Schwartz regards the cultural revolution as a confrontation between the Maoist group and CCP, implying thereby that Mao was in a minority in the party organisation. In my opinion, at the top level in the party, Mao may have been in a minority. But the cultural revolution demonstrated that a majority of the party ranks and the vast majority of the masses actively supported Mao's policies. Therefore, to say that Mao did not represent the majority in the party would be far from true. In fact Mao has always stressed in all stages of the revolution the role of the party. He has said; 'As the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party must exist as long as the dictatorship of the proletariat exists'.

It is also not fair to say, as Schram alleges, that Mao regarded the CCP merely as an assemblage of the like minded people and not as an entity with a definite structure. It is now known that after the cultural revolution, the Communist Party was reorganised. First the party structure at national level was organised, then by the end of June 1971, 24 party committees had been set up in 24 provinces. Thus, after the cultural revolution, the CCP has again become an organised party with a clearer political line.

Bernstein, Oksenberg, Klein and Goldman deal with the same issues while taking up an analysis of some concrete policies. According to Bernstein, even in the 1960's there were bureaucratic elements in the organisation. In the middle of the 1960's says Oksenberg, Chinese society had become a stable society, therefore it was anti-revolutionary. Klein points out that for the purpose of development, the

need of some sort of bureaucratic organisation consisting of experts cannot be disputed. But this type of thinking was not acceptable to Mao. Goldman deals with the 1962 relaxation on intellectuals, initiated by the Liu Shao Chi group and shows that this was utilised to criticise Mao's line in literary forums. These trends amounted to pursuing a political line which was regarded by Mao as 'revisionist'. Thus the cultural revolution was the inevitable choice to prevent such a course.

A review of these articles shows that they take rather a superficial view of the cultural revolution. It is too simplistic to say that the cultural revolution was merely a device to wreck the party for the personal glorification of Mao. Some fundamental ideological issues were involved, such as—pursuing the mass line, putting politics in command and deciding whether the class struggle continued in the dictatorship of the proletariat. The conflict was essentially between two lines of thought on the nature of socialist construction in China which would determine China's future.

All the authors in this volume agree on one point, that Mao undermined the role of the party. However, it can hardly be disputed that Mao attaches supreme importance to the party as an instrument of leading the revolution and constructing the socialist society. At the same time, to him the party is not an end in itself. As he wrote in his article on 'The Question of Agricultural Co-operation' in 1955: 'We must have faith in the masses, we must have faith in the party, these are two cardinal principles. If we doubt these principles, we shall accomplish nothing.'

The cultural revolution was aimed at taking power from those who were pursuing a 'revisionist' line. Throughout the cultural revolution, the party as such was nowhere denounced. It was only a section of the party leadership which was the target. As the famous quotation from the Red Book reads 'The force at the core leading our cause forward is the Chinese Communist Party'. This was one of the most quoted sayings of Mao during the last phase of the cultural revolution. Thus, the cultural revolution was not a device to wreck the party but to consolidate the party.

G. Joshi

**COMMUNIST POLICIES TOWARD THE INTELLECTUAL CLASS** by Chalmers A. Johnson  
Hongkong: Union Research Institute, 1959.

**THOUGHT REFORM OF THE CHINESE INTELLECTUALS** by Theodore H. E. Chen.  
Hongkong University Press, 1960.

The two books under review have a common theme—the conflict between the Chinese Communist Party and the intellectuals in China. Though neither of the books includes the events beyond the fifties, the story told of the unorthodox intel-

lectuals and the open-minded youth illuminates the happenings of the sixties, especially the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

If the communists are orthodox, they are pragmatic too. If they want to impose upon the intellectuals an orthodox doctrine, they, at the same time, do not want to stifle the creativity of the intellectuals, which is needed for building up a modern, industrialized society. Hence arises a contradiction in their approach towards the intellectuals. The Chinese Communist leadership, being no exception, adopted an oscillating policy towards the intellectuals in China—a policy of pressure, alternating with relaxation. It pressurised the intellectuals until the latter refused to create; then it relaxed until its control over them was threatened. In fact, it tried to establish an equilibrium between the opposing forces of orthodoxy and creativity, but that equilibrium is yet to be actualized.

On reading Chalmers A. Johnson's book, one is left with an impression that the conflict between the Chinese Communist Party and the intellectuals in China was purely an ideological one. That there was an overtone of ideology in it is undisputed, but it is, at the same time, admitted that there was an element of a power struggle in it. For instance, the conflict in the literary field between Chou Yang on the one hand and Hu Feng, Ting Ling, Ch'en Ch'ieh-shia and Feng Hsueh-feng on the other was more an outcome of factional and personal rivalries, and less a clash of ideological outlooks.

That the intellectuals in China did not forge a united front against the party leadership nor did they have a common stand, and that there were several factions or interest groups among them, are known to all who have carefully studied the relation between the party and the intellectuals in China. How these factions operated, how one of them at a particular point of time earned the credence and goodwill of the party leadership by depriving others of it, should be included in any discussion on the intellectuals in Communist China.

Unfortunately, however, Chalmers A. Johnson has completely ignored these things in his work. Secondly, he has not cared to explain the shifts in the party's policy towards the intellectuals. These shifts have been largely determined by internal economic and political factors, and, at times, by international events. What these factors were and how they contributed to a particular shift in policy will remain a most interesting part of any discussion on Communist China. Thirdly, the author seems to have depended for his investigation on scanty English sources and those which have been translated by others from Chinese into English, thereby inviting the charge of not making an ex-

haustive use of even the important source-materials, a part of which still remains untranslated.

Credit, however, is due to the person who has pioneered a book-length discussion on such an important theme. Besides, the book itself has a few points of attraction. It embodies an interesting debate on the Marxian content of the Communist Revolution in China, and its implications for the intellectuals there. The author has tried to refute the argument, put forward by Benjamin I. Schwartz and Sardar K. M. Panikkar that 'Maoism is more of a Chinese ideology than a Russian or Marxist'. This theory, in the author's view, 'arose precisely from the fact that it was the rebellious peasants that were Mao's greatest asset'.

The author argues that throughout the history of China there have been peasant rebellions, but the Taiping Rebellion of the mid-19th century was the first to have a genuine revolutionary nature, and was, therefore, 'incorporated into the Marxist theory of Chinese history'. The Taipings and the Communist revolutionaries, in his view, 'are of greater significance in arguing for the uniqueness of modern Communism in China, than as an indication of a typical Chinese behaviour pattern'. 'Maoism', he says, may be unorthodox in many respects, but, in the final analysis, it is more similar to than different from Marxism.

He also challenges C. P. Fitzgerald's view that the philosophy of Imperial China is akin to communism, that the Empire was as absolute, totalitarian and hierarchic as communism is, that the Empire had a set doctrine—the teachings of Confucius, as the Communist regime has the teachings of Marx, as interpreted by Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung. In the author's opinion, if there is any similarity between the two, that pertains to authoritarianism in general.

On the question of intellectual dissent, the author maintains that 'dissent, if accompanied by withdrawal from active participation in the government', was permitted under the Confucian order, but this is taboo in the communist set-up. He rather agrees with Arthur F. Wright who observes: 'While the traditional order put stress on orthodoxy, there were always some among the educated who, within the world of literati-officialdom, openly challenged existing interpretations, who saw in the classics other meanings than those ordained at the capital. These men were not subverting the basic values of the Confucian order, but they were dissenters within the large and ever shifting scope of traditional theory. The Communists, however, allow no dissent, even among those whose devotions to basic Communist principles is unquestioned' (p. 9).

Whether one agrees with these views or not, this lively discussion has definitely raised the academic worth of the work under review. The book has another point of attraction. It has carried between

its covers the lives and works of a panorama of people who have adorned the world of modern Chinese intellect, and the currents and cross-currents of ideas in the mind of modern China.

Theodore H. E. Chen's book, though published only a year later, is certainly more comprehensive, and better documented. Being a historical analysis, it gives an understanding of the development of Chinese Communist policies and practices on 'thought reform'. 'Thought reform', in the view of the present author, has two aspects. Its negative aspect is 'the cleansing the mind of non-Marxist thoughts and ideas', while it has a positive aim—the remoulding of thought to produce new patterns of thinking'. Why is 'thought' reform necessary? It is because everyone in a communist society must have a 'correct' ideological 'viewpoint' or political outlook. It is more necessary for the intellectuals, because they are to lead public opinion and set a good example to the common people.

Chen's book is divided into two parts. The first deals with the period of New Democracy (1950-52), and the second with that of Socialist Construction (1953-57). The second is more significant from the point of view of the intellectuals, since the latter period saw a healthy intellectual ferment in Communist China, though for a short interval, as a result of the famous Hundred Flowers policy. 'Thought reform' or 'ideological struggle' began almost with the birth of the Chinese Communist Party. As early as 1929, Mao Tse-tung waged a struggle against petty bourgeois ideologies which had infected the infant Red Army. 'Thought reform', however, remained confined to the ranks of party members and party workers till 1949 when the Communists assumed power on a national scale. After 1949, it was extended to the entire population, because the consolidation of military victory necessitated victory on the ideological front.

Chen's major thesis is that the intellectuals in China or in any totalitarian State will be able to resist indoctrination, howsoever difficult it may be. He fails to believe that the intellectuals can be so thoroughly 'brainwashed' that they would come to a state of mental vacuum, a state which makes indoctrination easy. He also does not believe that a totalitarian rule can guarantee the subservience of the intelligentsia which, he thinks retains for ever, an independent mind, if not independent activity. His minor thesis in the book is that 'thought reform' will remain a weapon in the hands of the communists, so long as they believe that human thought can be remoulded into a new, uniform pattern, ordained by them. As to the technique of 'thought reform', he observes: 'It is a never-ending process with recurrent demands for self-examination, for criticism and self-criticism, for new confessions and fresh pledges. It carries on under different slogans at different

times but the same methods of group pressure are used, and the real objective is always the complete surrender of the individual to the Party and the State.' (p. 194)

The present reviewer fully agrees with the major conclusions reached in the book, but he, at the same time, is again disappointed at not finding in it any attempt on the part of the author to draw a line between interest and ideology, between ego and ethos in the broad area of conflict between the party and the intellectuals. Secondly, value-judgment is neither the use of polemics nor pulpit-oratory. It means weighing the merits and demerits of different values or value-systems. The author of the present work cannot escape the charge of exhibiting his prejudice against the whole communist set-up, and of trying to make heroes of dissenters in that set-up. If objectivity is a rare phenomenon, an overdose of subjectivity is also not pardonable.

Naranarayan Das

**CANTON UNDER COMMUNISM: Programme and Politics in a Provincial Capital 1949-1968** by Ezra Vogel, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1969.

Ezra Vogel's study of *Canton under Communism* provides revealing glimpses of Chinese politics at the local city level. The spotlight is on the socio-economic changes introduced by the communists. The monolithic image of China is recast into a moving tale of social transformation involving real situations and real actors. It is a study of courage, contradictions and compromises with occasional flashes of fiction-like adventure, assault and retreat. The theme is the communist 'conquest of society.' The main protagonists are Mao's trustworthy allies. The villains of the piece are Left opportunists and Right revisionists. The drama unfolds in the city of Canton immediately preceding the hour of Liberation. The narrative continues well until the close of the cultural revolution.

The tension-filled story of these twenty years (1949-1968) recaptures in colourful details the triumphs and tragedies of the revolution. By dealing with the individual and collective strains involved in the process of change, Vogel has rescued the book from becoming one of the standard inventories of ruthless politicization. With its unflinching eye for the human qualities of the adventurers, the book recreates the moments of excitement, tension and frustration and rebuilds in this process the utopian dimensions of the vision, its gradual withering away and the ceaseless, and almost pathetic, attempts to keep it alive.

Vogel's sources of data collection are diverse. He has extensively used the official Cantonese newspaper, *Nan-fang Jih-pao* (Southern Daily), provincial radio broadcasts and refugee interviews. Without ever setting his foot in Canton, he has succeeded in abstracting the vantage viewpoint of

the officials who stand as intermediate links between the central government and the local populations. Throughout the book, one witnesses the process of downward transmission of commands from Peking, the slow and tortuous readjustments of the party directives and the fight for provincial power and prerogatives. Suddenly all the major national political campaigns become alive as they are recreated in Canton.

The chapters are arranged in chronological order from the takeover and consolidation to land reform, early economic control, the Hundred Flowers movement, the Great Leap Forward, the Socialist Education Campaign and the Cultural Revolution. The emphasis is on the socio-historical review rather than on the structural-functional analysis. Yet Vogel's sociological background comes much in evidence by his remarkable capacity to transcend the constraints of officially released information.

His central conclusion validates the obvious: the progressive political control of social institutions and processes. The study of Canton conclusively demonstrates that the Chinese have developed a political system strong enough to regulate the entire society. The major economic, cultural, educational and rural activities have been brought within the scope of governmental management. The regime has made deep inroads not only into business enterprises but into local clans, villages, guilds and local associations which had formerly enjoyed essential autonomy.

Such a conclusion reaffirms certain general hypotheses about the Chinese model. The story of Canton is not a story of urbanization and social change or of the city life as an independent centre of innovations. In fact, in Vogel's study it appears as a 'dependent variable' receiving, experiencing and internalizing extraneous commands and only reacting to stimuli from Peking.

Social change in Canton is not a product of its special geographical location, its differential rate of economic development, or its inner particularistic achievements. Instead, it has been brought about by primary changes in the political organization which have, in turn, affected the entire range of social interaction. In order to achieve this, the Chinese communists have not hesitated to use force but the predominant mode of social control has been persuasion and propaganda. And, finally, with the mixed experience of successes and setbacks, the Chinese have now matured beyond 'native optimism' and compromised to admit 'bourgeois reforms' of transportation, communications and economic rationalization.

In general, this conclusion stands in agreement with the particular research findings of most China-watchers. In particular, it leaves some of the same general questions unexamined or unanswered. The most pressing problem is that of the broader framework in which one can meaningfully explain (and not just describe) the dynamics of the Chinese experiment. In the preface of this book, the author

claims to have attempted 'to get beyond his western academic biases to understand China on its own terms.'

In the absence of a conceptual scheme, it is difficult to verify the veracity of this admirable sentiment. What are the exact Chinese terms on which to understand China? The published news reports in *Nan-fang Jih-pao* which is the highest official provincial party organ, and which provides for nearly seventy-five per cent of the foot-notes in Vogel's study, is hardly an answer. The Chinese news-media, as the author himself admits, is to inspire and encourage rather than to record facts. How can one build the whole edifice on such shaky ground? Near the end of his endeavour, Vogel states that 'much of what the communists did in Kwangtung follows logically from pre-Liberation trends and might have been done by any government' (p. 351). What, then, is the specific communist component in the process of induced changes in Canton?

Vogel has credited the present regime with an institutional breakthrough in political control. What are the actual sources of this breakthrough? Is it Maoist ideology, the Soviet antecedents or the continuing cultural complex? The author is generally vague on the problems of continuity and change and occasionally his western bias creeps in, notwithstanding his denials, when, for example, he considers China's traditional structures as antithetical to the spirit of modernity (pp. 7, 32). Further, at one place he maintains that the Confucian heritage is completely replaced by an alien ideology (p. 9) while, in another context, he believes that Confucian concepts continue to affect modern Chinese behaviour (pp. 44, 134).

These problems have resulted because there is no general scheme underlying the whole study beyond and outside the present communist framework. Despite 'bourgeois reforms' to which the author alludes, Canton is not really becoming 'modern' in the western sense. As it has always been in Chinese history, it continues to be a microcosm of the Central government. It is a miniature replica of the nation at large. Unlike other metropolises of the world, it is not a trend-setter and does not glorify in its own urban way of life.

This fact, although it is clearly discernible in Vogel's study, is not specifically analyzed since the author has not attempted to study Canton in historical and comparative perspective. However, the twenty years which have been studied in depth will still make staggering revelations to a large segment of Indian audiences which are wavering between effusive enthusiasm and depressing denigration or between visions of the coming socialist utopia and a totalitarian prison in China. With great subtlety and effect, the book 'brings the men back' in discussing the Chinese political scene beyond slogans, policy statements, party lines and journalistic despatches. To China experts and other scholars, it offers detailed investigation of Cantonese politics as a test



case of their own conceptual paradigms; to others it reveals the nature and extent of Chinese 'politics in command' in a provincial capital.

Krishna Prakash Gupta

## REVOLUTION AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY:

Peking's Support for Wars of National Liberation  
by Peter Van Ness, University of California Press,  
1970.

This study is primarily concerned with an analysis of the principles of Chinese foreign policy—more specifically, the use of revolution as an instrument of foreign policy. It is an attempt to make a systematic analysis not just of the theory but also the practice of Peking's support for wars of national liberation in all the countries of the third world, namely, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The Maoist approach to the national liberation struggle is treated in the first part of the book. Subsequent chapters deal with the Chinese endorsement of revolutions, relations with revolutionary movements and a selection of countries as targets of revolution. The analysis focuses on the period 1965-67, continuing through the high tide of the cultural revolution in the summer of 1967.

The findings of Peter Van Ness' 'empirical research' tend to charge Peking of being very selective in its official endorsements of specific revolutions. In 1965, about 23 movements were endorsed out of a possible total of 120. Further, Peking's selection of the targets of revolution is found to be a function more of policies pursued by foreign governments towards China than of political conditions prevailing in a particular country or the ideological and military strategy of local revolutionary organizations. In other words, the regimes friendly to Peking were often not selected as targets for revolution despite the existence of revolutionary movements. For instance, armed struggles against the governments of four countries—French Somaliland, Kenya, Burma and Indonesia occurred but none of them were endorsed by Peking as a war of national liberation. On the other hand, eighteen independent countries out of the 23 endorsed for their national liberation struggles—were found rating high in hostility to Peking in their State policy.

Finally, according to the author although the earlier trend of viewing national liberation struggles as tactics in undermining the pro-western orientation of world politics was disrupted during the high tide of cultural revolution and emphasis was shifted to allegiance and identification of foreign revolutionary movements with the strategy and ideology of Mao Tse-tung, yet Peking's foreign policy continues to be motivated by the perceived needs of the State.

At the outset, one must analyse the basic premises of the author as also the possible alternative approaches. Peter Van Ness evidently tends to view the aims and objectives of Chinese foreign policy 'like

the foreign policy of many States—first and foremost concerned with the preservation and security of the State and the development of its power and prestige, be it for National or Ideological reasons, or for both.' The State policy thesis of Van Ness except for its ideological qualification approximates to the national expansionist view, which equates the objectives of Chinese foreign policy with those usually held by any other State.

An alternative approach of analysing China's role in world politics would be by seeing it through the prism of the Maoist world system. According to the Maoist scheme as stated by Lin Biao in 'Long Live the Victory of People's War', the principal contradiction in the contemporary world situation was between oppressed nations and imperialism, and the principal enemy was identified as United States imperialism. Thus, the strategic aim was to overthrow U.S. imperialism. However, strategy and tactics are not only influenced by ideological considerations but they have also to respond to the existing realities. Thus, at the level of implementation of policies, an amount of flexibility resulting from tactical adjustment is inevitable. Therefore, these deviations should be distinguished from 'pragmatism' or 'opportunism'.

The conditions for China's support to the national liberation struggles as laid down by Van Ness seem to be inadequate vis-a-vis the prerequisites as seen by Peking. He sees Chinese endorsement of foreign revolution on the condition that the movement seeks popular support and legitimacy and that it pursues military tactics on the concept of protracted war. However, he overlooks the dominant goal of China's foreign policy, i.e., its struggle to overthrow U.S. imperialist domination. It is in pursuit of this ultimate aim that Peking endorses a particular movement and does not recognize another if it leads to contrary results.

Thus, there is a wide discrepancy between the Maoist view and the view upheld by Peter Van Ness in this study. This apparent contradiction comes out even more clearly in the present conditions. For instance, Peking's reaction to the coup in Sudan is explained by the official friendliness and agreement on a united front against imperialism between the two governments. China's rather disappointing stand on Bangla Desh can also be explained by the same logic. Unfortunately, the same logical consistency can be seen in the explanation of Peking's attitude to the Guevarist Movement in Ceylon. To China, both Pakistan and Ceylon are allies in the anti-imperialist front in Afro-Asia.

The ultimate analysis of China's strategy should be look upon as neither dogmatic, that is derived strictly from ideology, nor pragmatic, that is merely guided by environmental pressures, but rather as dialectical blending of both kinds of forces—ideological and environmental. Therefore, in studying

Peking's varying attitudes to the movements in the third world we should not ignore the implications of the Maoist world outlook nor should we under-rate the nature of strategies and policies. Besides, in order to move towards achieving its ultimate foreign policy goals, China has to operate within the existing world realities. Therefore, certain environmental pressures upon Peking's decisions are bound to constrain the ideological dictates or stipulations.

Taken from this view point, one would find it hard to agree with Peter Van Ness that there are no basic differences in the foreign policy behaviour of China and the U.S. China's recent moves to win more friends and to befriend even enemies should not be taken as China's deviation from its revolutionary goals because China continues to reiterate its anti-imperialistic foreign policy goals and it has not relaxed any of its terms on the outstanding bilateral or multilateral issues.

Neelam Dhamija

### THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN ASIA by Patwant Singh, Hutchinson, 1971.

Until recently it was popular to regard Asia as a backwash area in the stream of international affairs; in fact as a mere appendage of Europe. Even today, the Asian scene is portrayed through such terms as strife-torn, tension ridden, corrupt; as an area of instability and political decay, by the westerner. His lack of understanding has only added another grievance at a time when many Asian countries are undergoing a nationalistic upsurge. A common colonial experience and the present brutality of great power politics in this area of the world has resulted in the growth of what Patwant Singh in his book, *The Struggle for Power in Asia*, calls an Asian consciousness.

In Patwant Singh's analysis of the coming power struggle in Asia, the vortex lies east of India. Of the powers that will play a decisive role are India, China, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. He excludes other small countries such as North Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore, which according to him may emerge as strong regional powers but will not have the capacity to alter the balance of power in Asia. Significantly, Japan has also been excluded and even though he does not belittle its importance, one wonders whether he may not have been too harsh in his criteria of selectivity. One may also question the inclusion of India in this group. No doubt India has made tremendous progress in recent years and will certainly play an important role in world affairs. However, at the present moment and for the next five to seven years, I do not see India generating true power!

Two recent events—the attempt at normalization of relations by China and the United States, and closely following it, the Indo-Soviet treaty, may greatly change the present alignment of power. The situation needs to be watched carefully. India for

the first time seems to have cast its lot with the Soviet Union, and as such, may have closed her options to an independent policy.

Tracing U.S. involvement in Asia, from the annexation of the Philippines to Vietnam, Patwant Singh forcefully demonstrates that it was a 'logical outcome of policies which were deliberately interventionist since the turn of the century' (p. 62). He has a good answer for apologists of U.S. policy who claim that Vietnam was a mistake. According to the author, the extent of U.S. involvement in Vietnam was no mere accident, but part of a pattern which began in Hawaii (August 12, 1898) and subsequently covered the Philippines, China, Japan and Korea.

The United States had a relatively clean record in comparison to other western powers as regards China. This advantage, however, was quickly discarded by an administration which, contrary to the existing political realities, embarked on a policy of containing China. Now, over a period of over 20 years, there has been an attempt to establish a dialogue. The author feels that a rapprochement between the U.S. and China is to be welcomed but warns that this does not mean a change in China's policies in South and South-East Asia.

The liberal school of thought in the United States, led by John Fairbank, has been advocating that China is not expansionist. Reviewing Neville Maxwell's book, *India's China War*, Fairbank concluded that, 'the Indian case suggests that China's expansionism is part of the reactive kind, not compulsive or inbred'. Patwant Singh feels that a reduction of tensions with the U.S. will enable China to concentrate on her problems with Russia and pursue her other objectives elsewhere in Asia. He rejects the Fairbank thesis and states that China is definitely expansionist.

Patwant Singh also tackles the problem of the politics of foreign aid. He makes a case that U.S. aid policies have by and large been a failure, both for the donor and the recipient, and calls for a withdrawal of aid in its present form. Criticizing the massive induction of U.S. arms aid to her allies, he correctly points out that wherever the resolve of Asians to defend their existing systems of government is genuine, they will generate the resources needed to defend themselves. And where such resolve is only skin-deep, no amount of propping up by the U.S. can save these systems (p. 71). Unfortunately, the author does not deal with this fascinating subject at much length. He does not extend this analysis to the aid policies of the Soviet Union, which seems to be committing the same mistakes as the U.S.

A close look at Soviet foreign policy clearly reveals that Russia has made numerous attempts to establish itself as an Asian power. The mediation between India and Pakistan in 1965 at Tashkent was merely one such attempt to

establish her position as an arbitrator of disputes in the Asian sub-continent. Patwant Singh also takes the Soviets to task for their expansionist policies specially their annexation of outer Mongolia. There is little doubt as to the strategic value of this real estate to the Soviets. China is well aware of this and has not given up its claim to the territory. Besides, China is not likely to appreciate the threat that Russian missiles and fire-power pose to Sinkiang and China's own nuclear establishment.

In the last two years the Russian Navy has also begun to counter the influence of a once dominant U.S. 6th fleet in the Mediterranean. Russian ships have also been conspicuous in the Indian Ocean area. A shift in Soviet policy towards a balance between India and Pakistan became evident with Russian arms supplies to Pakistan in the late sixties. The author feels that Russian designs in South Asia were motivated by similar considerations as those of the U.S. policy towards South America. He feels that neither the USA nor the USSR are interested in seeing India and Pakistan strong and united. This may, however, be invalid at the present moment. It should be in the Russian interest to see a strong and united India at this period—of course under Russian tutelage and so long as they are able to make India heavily dependent on them.

In summary, some of the basic threads running through the book are:

1. U.S. policies in Asia have ignored the realities. They continue to do so in the case of India, which could provide a stabilizing role in the area.

2. The U.S. must adopt a low key role in the region and change its present aid policies.

3. Asia should not be the battleground for the Big Powers.

4. The Russians are expansionist and are prepared to subordinate ideology to their national self-interest. Their infusion of arms to third world countries will only derive them a short term benefit and is ultimately likely to rebound on them as in the case of the U.S. Their increased naval activity is likely to provoke a response from China and is not likely to provide security to countries on the sea-coast.

5. India is the key to the region. Only she can provide political stability to South East Asia. India, according to the author, is the only one who can counter the unsettling influence of China.

6. Most Asian countries are experiencing an upsurge of nationalism. Western attitudes in the area are creating a 'sense of alienation' resulting in a formation of an Asian consciousness.

7. Japan will play an important role in the region but will not generate 'true power'. Great power influence will decline in the region in proportion to the growth of Japan, China and India's influence.

TEJBIR SINGH

## Communism and Nationalism in India

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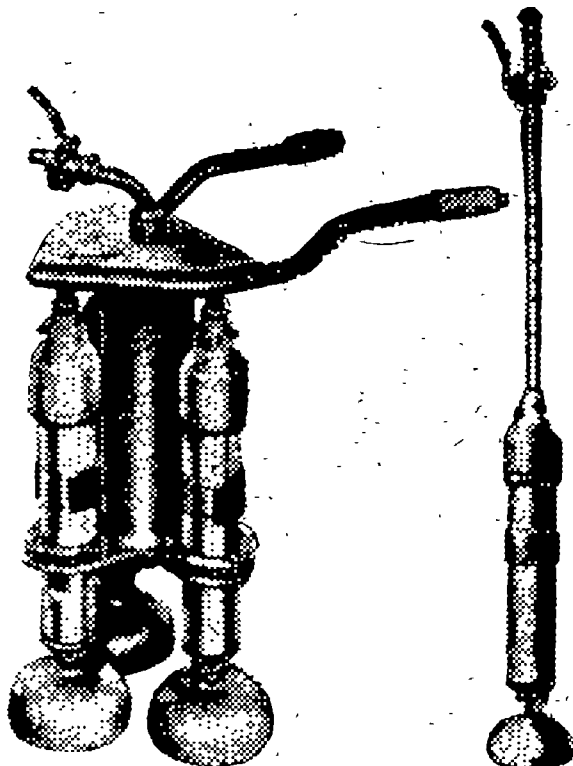
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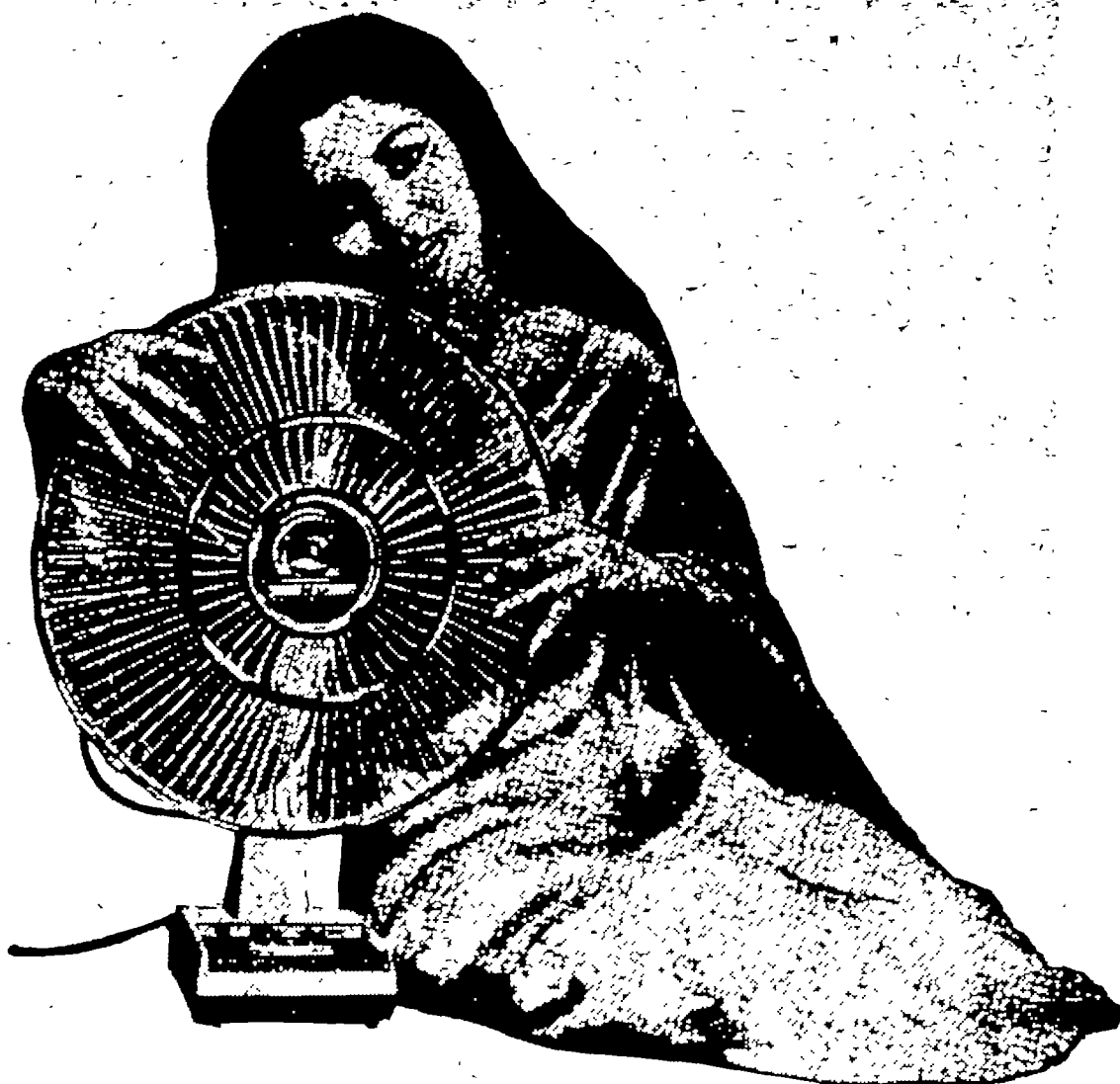
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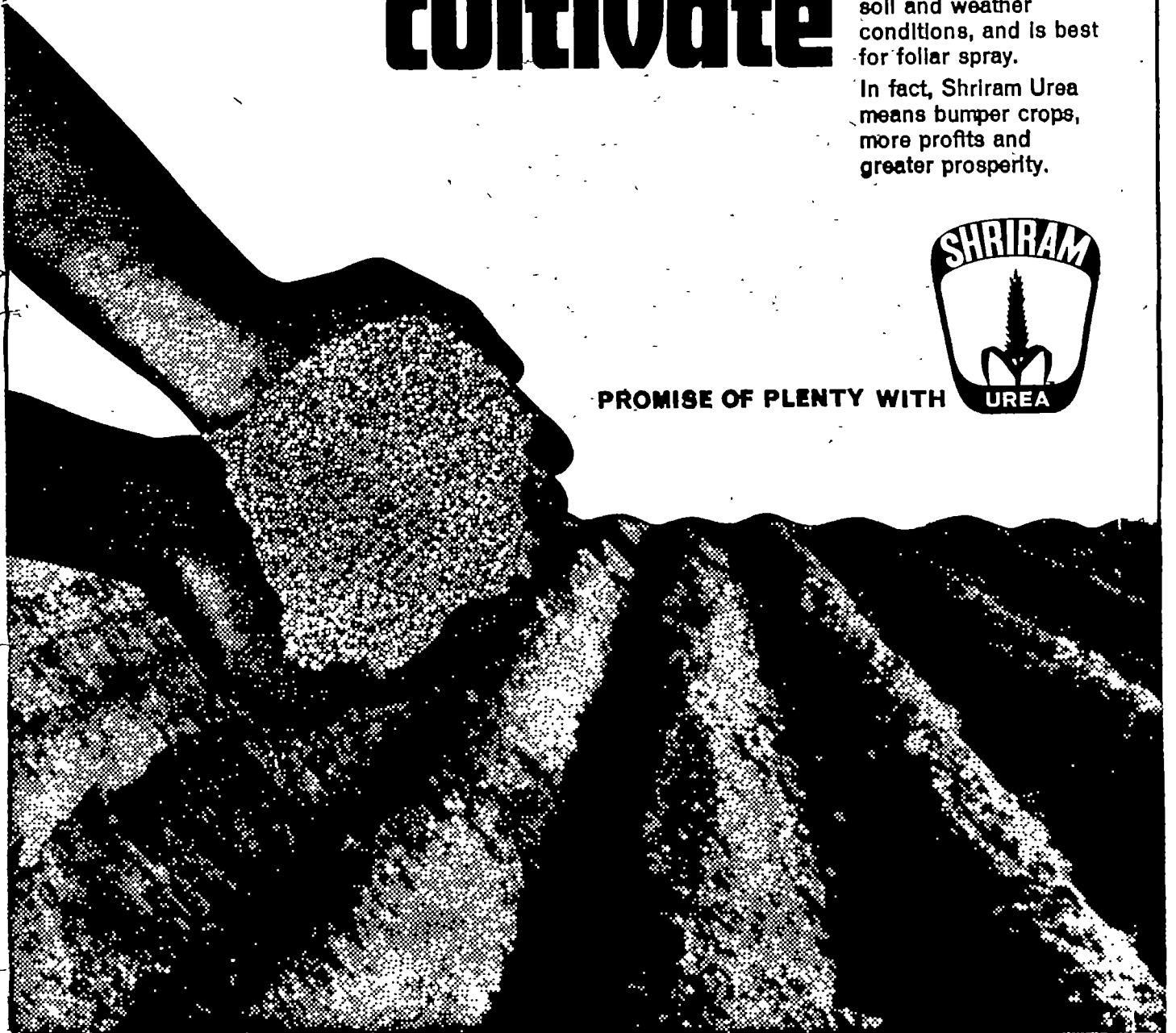
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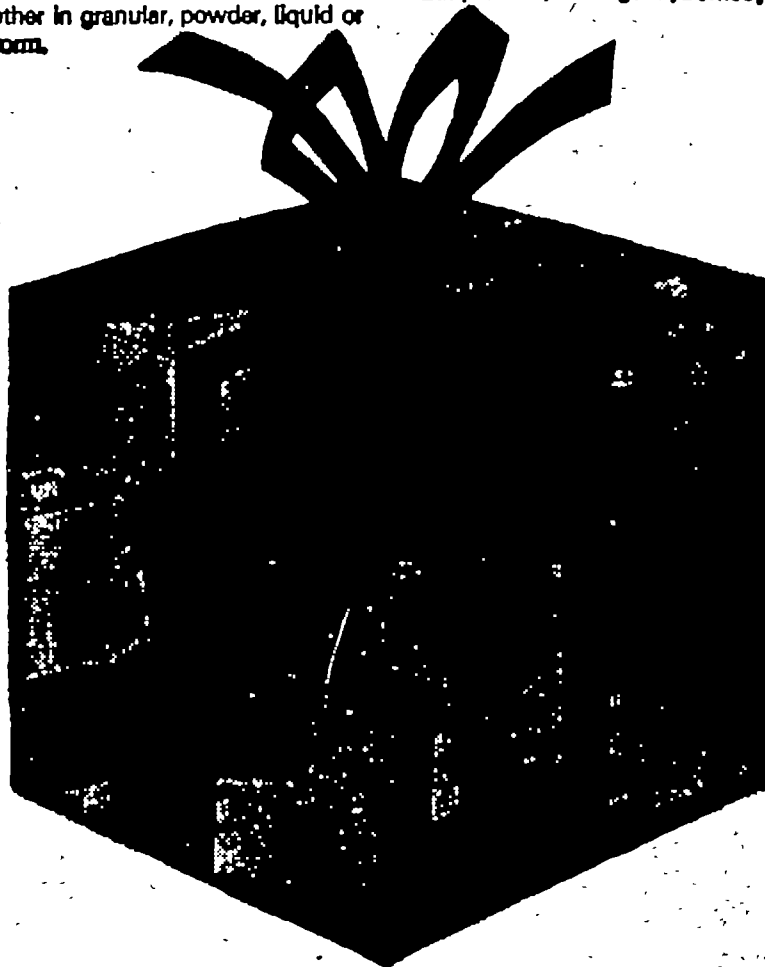
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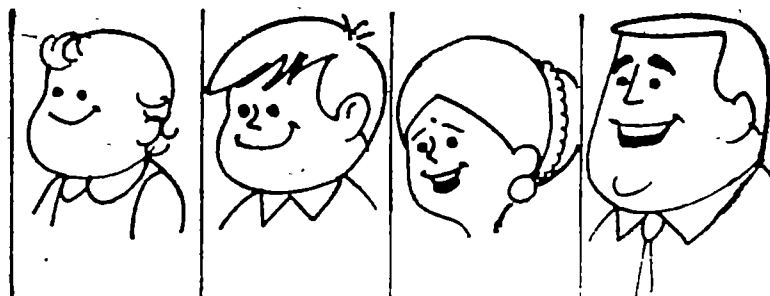


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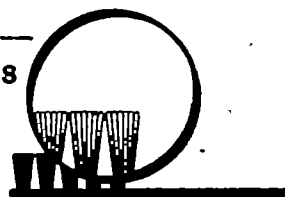
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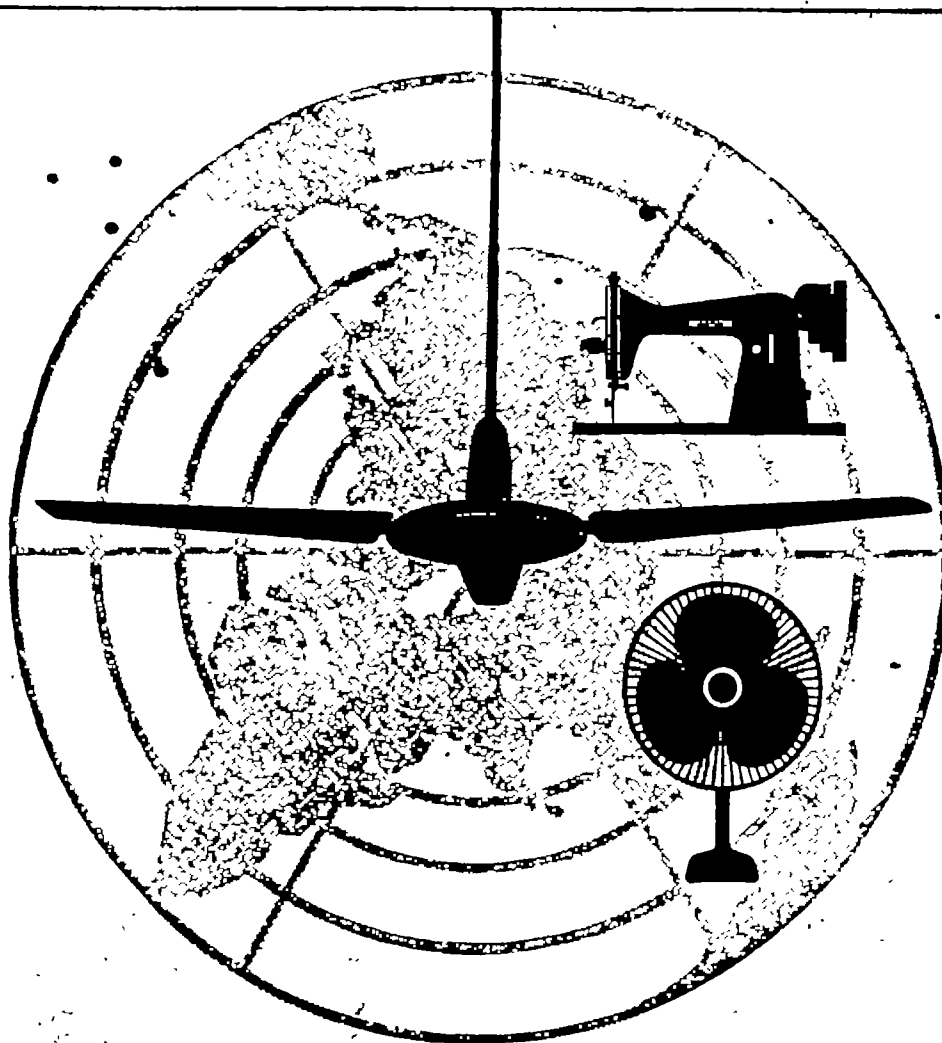
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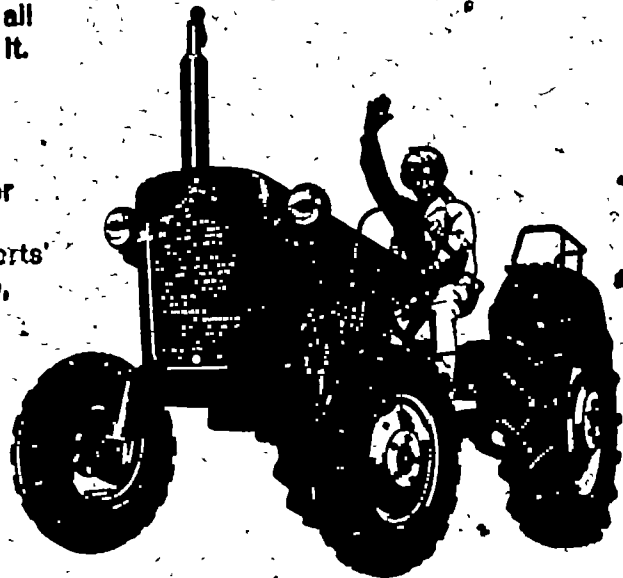
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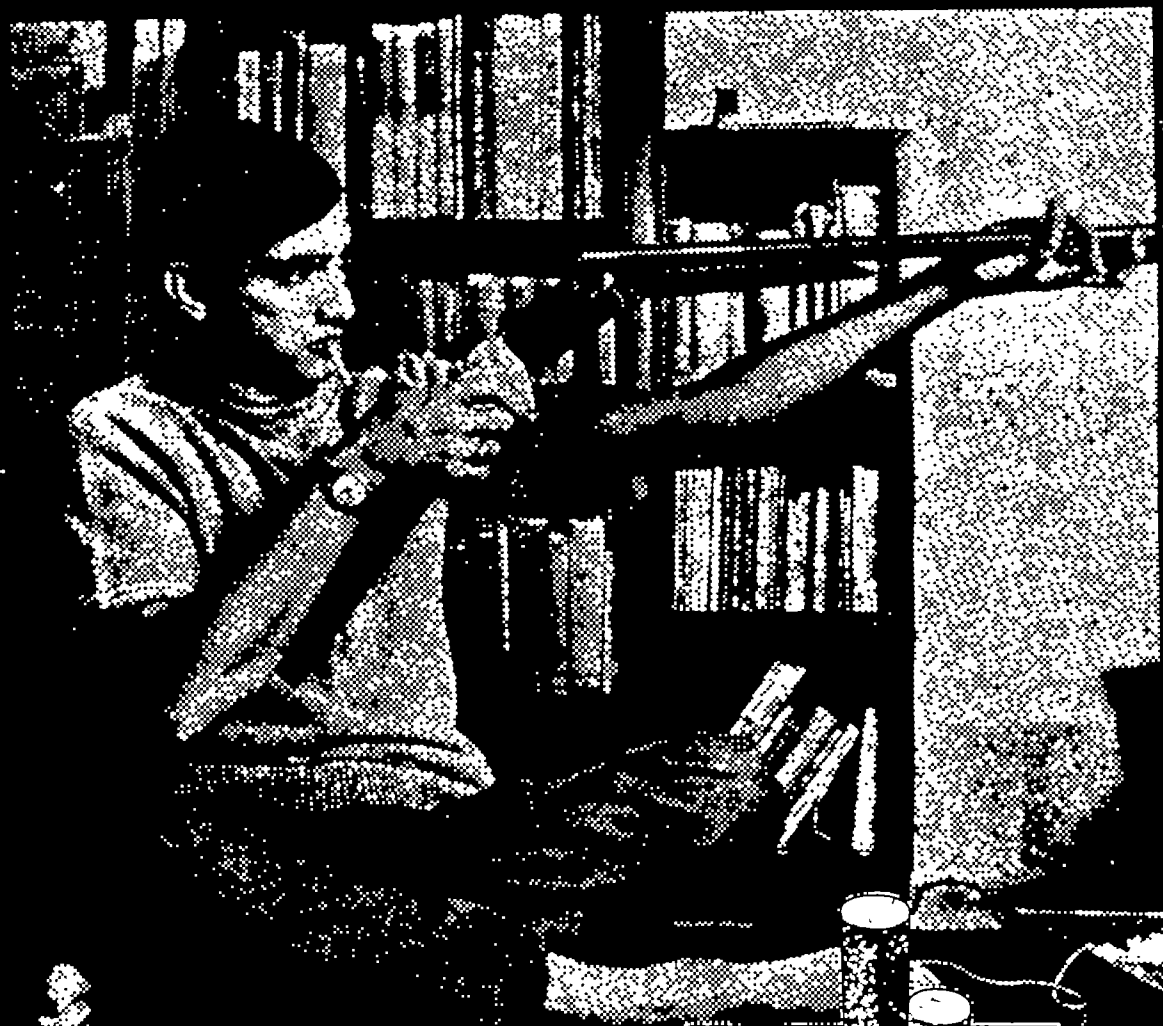
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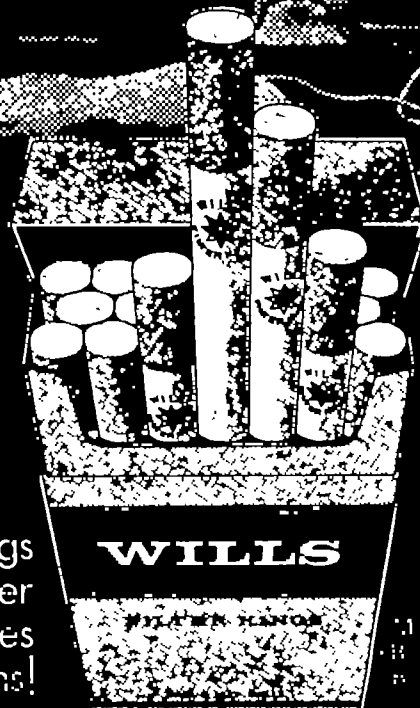
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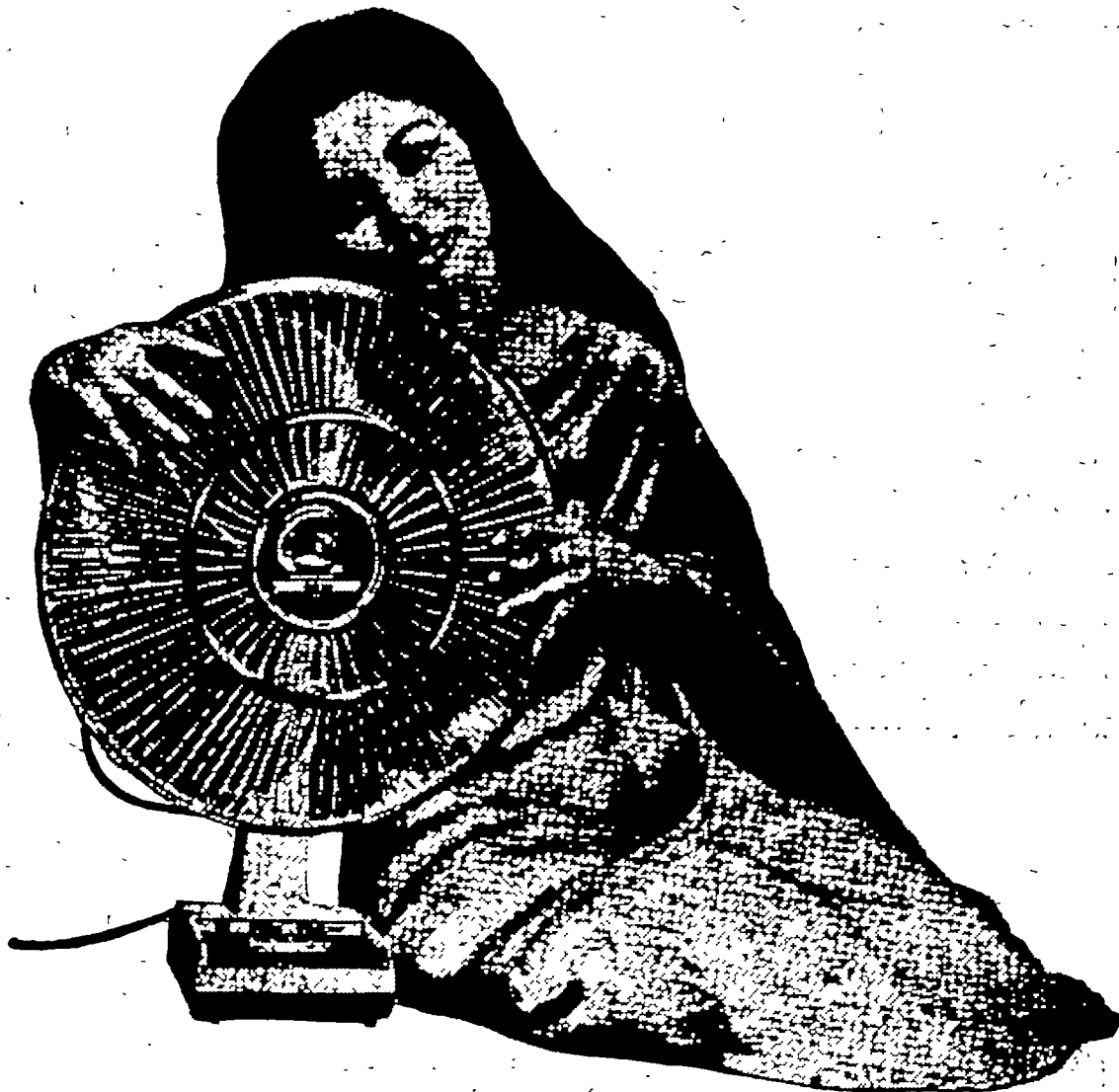
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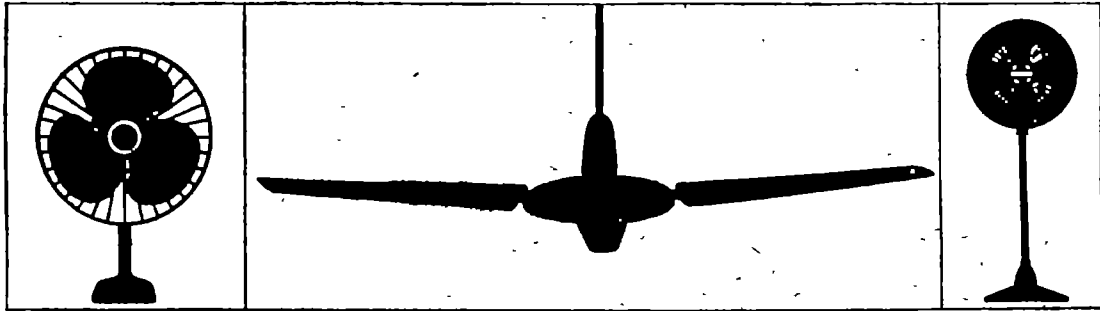
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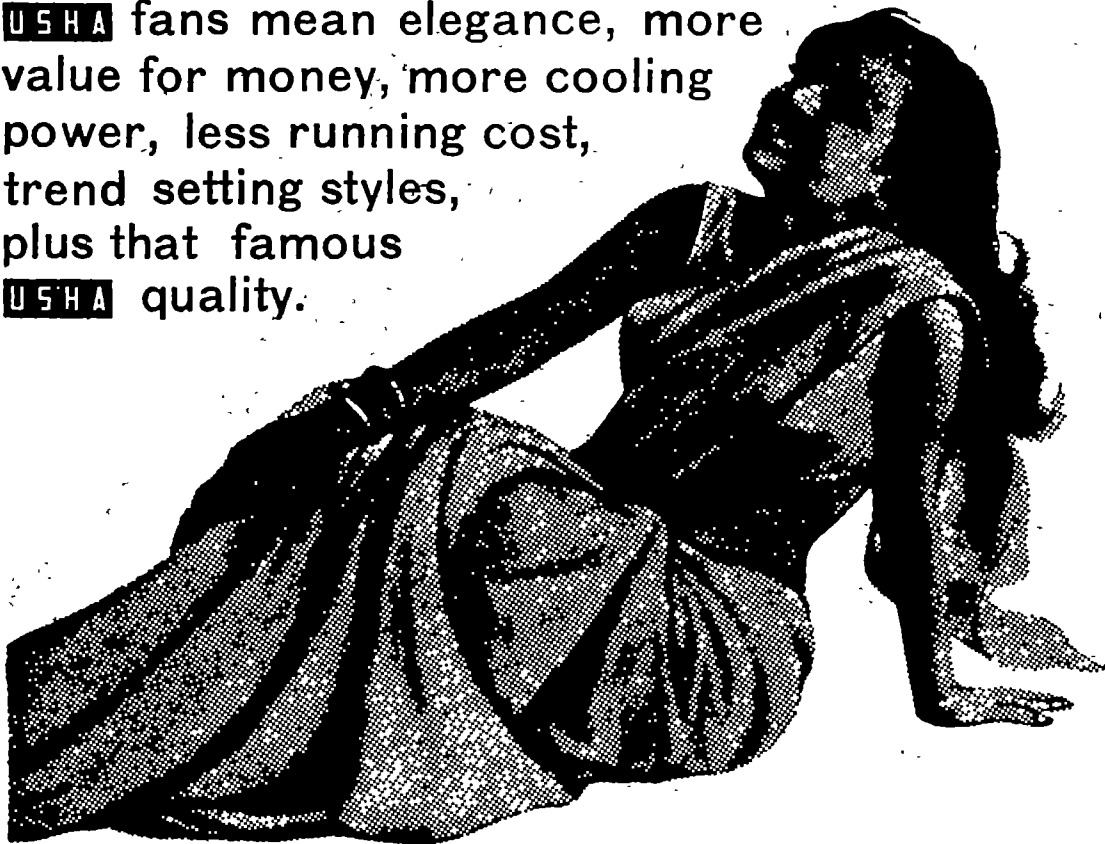
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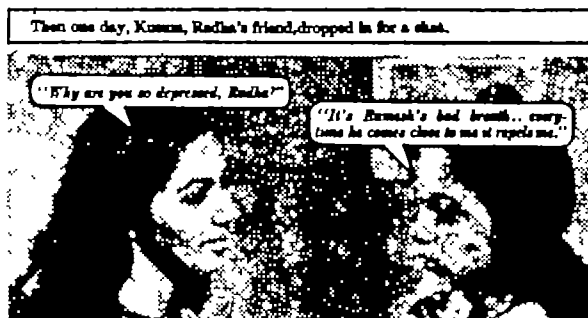
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# I love him so much. How can I tell him?

Just a month back Radha hated the thought of Ramesh leaving home...even for work. Now she can't bear to be close to him because of his bad breath.



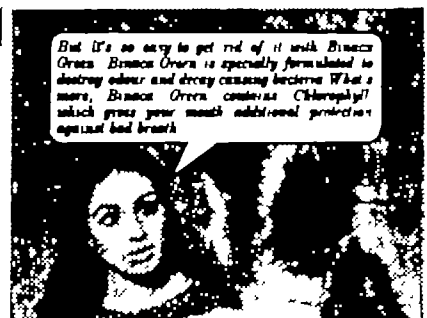
"Oh what shall I do? I can't allow my bad breath to come between us."



Then one day, Kousha, Radha's friend, dropped in for a chat.

"Why are you so depressed, Radha?"

"It's Ramesh's bad breath...every time he comes close to me it repels me."

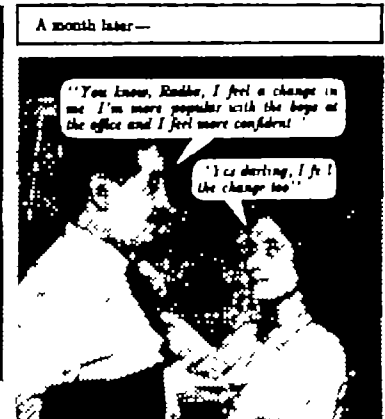


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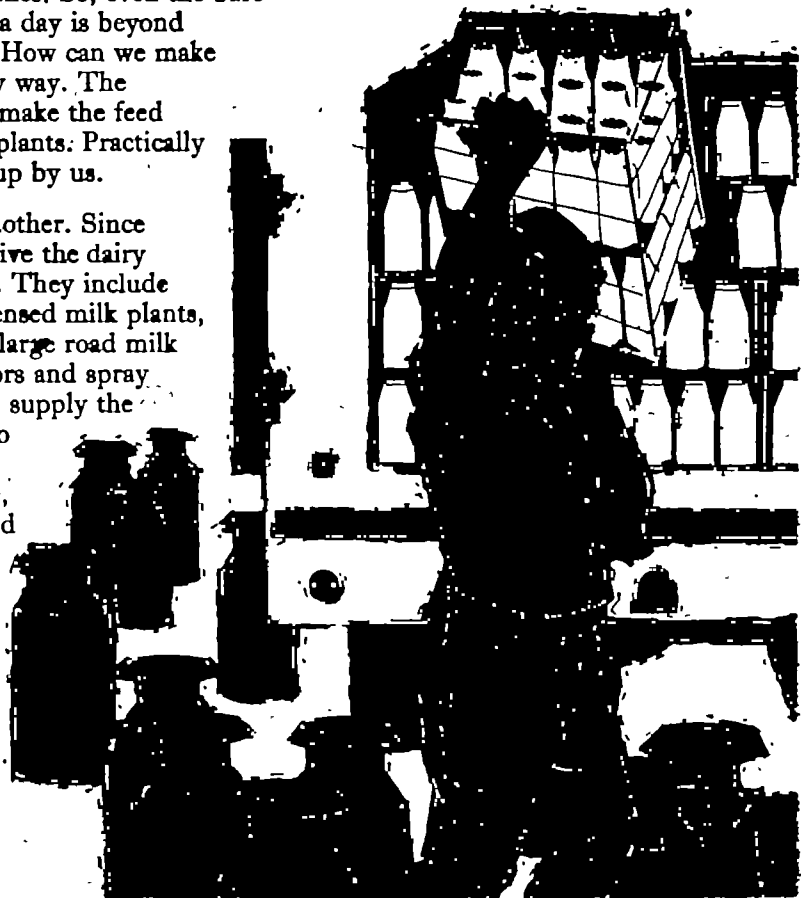
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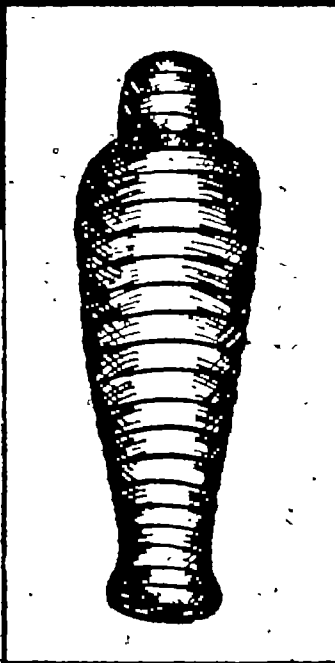
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## NEXT MONTH : CRISIS IN THE PRESS

# 146

## A NUCLEAR INDIA?

a symposium on  
the ramifications of  
entering the power game

symposium participants

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# The problem

OUR\* traumatic experience of the 1960s—the border confrontation with the Chinese, their massive invasion of our territories and the Pakistani aggression of 1965—clearly indicated to our government the necessity for planned military preparedness in the future, to face a war on two fronts. Problems of national security have since been accorded high priority and this heightened awareness resulted in increased defence outlays which made possible the implementation of a new Defence Ministry concept of five-year 'rolling plans' for the armed forces aimed not only at constant modernization and re-equipment of the three Services but also at expanding facilities for defence production, especially in the sophisticated fields of electronics and aircraft components.

In the contemporary context, India's defence posture today measures up to the threats posed by China and Pakistan. Our military preparedness is now more complete than it has ever been. What is not clear, however, is whether there is adequate awareness among our policy-makers of the developments that have taken place in the world regarding international policy-making and strategy during the past ten years or so—new concepts that will be applicable to all aspects of national security in India as elsewhere, in the 1970s.

Arguments and debates on defence matters in India today, whether official or otherwise, indicate that defence thinking continues to be almost exclusively conditioned by the military concepts of the 1950s and 1960s. Our defence policies of that era were formulated wholly in the environment of conventional power equations, not directly influenced by confrontations at super-power levels, because the inhibitions in

military strategy engendered by the vast power potential in the hands of nuclear nations did not immediately effect local conflicts between developing nations, particularly in Asia.

Today, all that has changed. The sphere of influence of nuclear strategy has moved eastwards to cover Asia; but as yet there is little indication that this development has been taken into consideration in formulating the future defence policy for India. Thus, a fundamental assumption continues to be made by our policy-makers that security must be based solely on the concept of the use of power—in the traditional sense—as opposed to the concept of deterrence, which exploits the *potential* of power, not only its use. There is an urgent need today to question this assumption and to examine possible new policies about defence, security and peace and how these goals might be achieved.

Developments in nuclear weapons, weapons technology in general, communications and transportation have concentrated large-scale military power in the hands of a few countries—and particularly in the hands of the two super powers which possess the scientific know-how, the technological and industrial base and the resources to corner the world's strategic market and influence the capacity of most other countries for self-defence. At the same time, (and for roughly the same reasons) local conflicts have now gained world-wide significance, leading to direct involvement in one form or another by the super powers. The result has been that all such conflicts have inevitably acquired the character of dual-level confrontations, one at the immediate level of the local adversaries and another at the level of the super powers.

At the lower, immediate level of confrontation between lesser powers, the war situation revol-

\*This article was written at the end of 1970

ves around the concept of 'defence', or the use of power, as distinct from the concept of 'deterrence', which is the primary issue at the higher level of the dual confrontation. And this divergence in strategic postures creates conditions which compromise the aims of national security so far as the powers at the lower level are concerned. For example, in the Arab-Israeli conflict, neither side can be sure that its national security is actually guaranteed by alliance with a super power. The gravitation of the mix of defence and deterrence tasks towards the more powerful level of the dual confrontation ensures that decisions will ultimately lie in the hands of the super-patrons, if necessary, regardless of the interests of their lower level 'allies'.

Thus, in these dual-level confrontations, the ultimate defence decision for the lower powers lies in foreign hands and despite treaties, alliances or understandings, a small power may be left helpless when the chips are down. Thus, military intervention or help from a super patron can be highly dangerous for the lesser power being 'defended' as the fate of South Vietnam clearly demonstrates.

In view of this new international concept—this dual-confrontation development which is a mix of defence and deterrence strategies—we in India must now reconsider our national security policy to accommodate the impact of this new strategy.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the aim of our defence policy was to prepare for a full scale conventional war against Pakistan but for only a 'limited' war on our northern frontier, where it was felt that all that was required was to counter patrol infiltrations across our borders. The rude awakening of 1962 put an end to that pipe-dream. Today, our defence policy has been

recast and is now designed to cater for conventional war on two fronts.

So far so good: but have we taken into consideration the possibility that this policy may in the future become as outdated as the limited aims of 1962?

India's national security aims since Independence—and the strategic policies that flowed from them—can be broadly interpreted as having passed through two distinct phases during the last twenty years or so. In the early Nehru era, when the strategic influence of the super power nuclear dialogue was confined to the NATO-European scene and therefore remote from the Asian sphere, our security purview took into consideration not only the question of the defence of India but also, if not explicitly, certainly tacitly, international objectives. Thus, Nehru's guarantee to Nepal in 1950, his policy regarding Bhutan and the extension of arms aid to Burma, and his opposition to the growing strategic domination of South East Asia by the United States and Great Britain, all displayed a broad international role in Asia. It was a great power role, even though in terms of actual power potential India nowhere near fulfilled the conditions such a role stipulates. Nevertheless, because of India's high standing at the U.N. and the moral force that the newly-emerging concept of non-alignment then exerted, Nehru's diplomatic effort in this field was a reckonable quantity in the international field.

In the second phase, which started with Nehru's miscalculations of China's aims and intentions regarding her irredentist border claims and culminated with the humiliating reverses of 1962, India was deprived of the moral force that it wielded on the international scene. Since then we have confined our national security aims to the defence of our own terri-

tory, basing our policies on the actual use of power: and since that power is limited to conventional, immediate level requirements of 'defence' we have implicitly accepted a lower-level (and therefore dependent) status in the new strategic environment of international confrontations. And in that process we have, whether we acknowledge it or not, compromised our sovereignty, because in any future confrontation affecting India's security we should be powerless to prevent the overriding superimposition of great power interests.

What we have to decide now is whether we are going to be content with perpetuating this 'lower power' status—which implies seeking the shelter of a great (or even middle) power umbrella and, therefore, surrendering our sovereignty. Such a state of dependence would be inevitable now that the strategic system of dual-level confrontation has spread to the Asian scene. The formulation of the ultimate aims of our national security would have to take this factor into account—just as Israel, the Arabs or South Vietnam must do today.

In reaching such a decision—that is, whether we are going to permanently accept a lower power status—we also have to take into account the changing strategic environment in Asia.

During the sixties, the forces and interests that caused development of dual-level confrontations, whether in the West or in Europe, emanated from the power dialogue of the two super powers, America and Russia. At that time, the difference in power potential between the two giants and the other nations was so great that only two categories of world powers were recognised—the supers and the rest. Not even the minor nuclear powers, Britain and France, could aspire to full independence in decision making.

In these circumstances, since there could be no question of any other nation emulating the power potential of the two supers, the relegation to the lower level in a dual-level confrontation was acceptable by all other powers as inevitable, both in Asia and the West. But this situation will change in the seventies and eighties. New developments have taken place on the international scene which no longer permit absolute strategic hegemony to be established by the two super powers.

Firstly, the establishment of a delicate nuclear stability balance between America and Russia during the past few years has induced mutual strategic inhibitions that greatly curtail their initiative and freedom of action in international relations. Starting at Cuba and following the confrontation process through Vietnam to the West Asia conflict, it can be seen that the former absolute strategic hegemony of the supers—which so affected NATO in the fifties—is no longer valid. This has had the result

of whittling down the power difference between the supers and the rest. The giants have been cut down to only a little more than life-size.

Secondly, the emergence of China as an independent nuclear decision-making centre (when she possesses an armoury of ICBMs and submarine-platform IRBMs and thus acquires a credible second-strike potential) will further reduce the gap between the giants and the rest, because it will expand the framework of the present bi-lateral nuclear dialogue to a tri-lateral one and thus broaden its strategic base.

Not only that, Japan, with her new programme for rearmament, which envisages a manifold increase in Defence Plan outlays during the next ten years or so, is also likely to assume great power status. She has already orbited a satellite, possesses the rocketing technology to launch ICBMs and has embarked on an ambitious nuclear programme, all of which place her in a position to become the sixth nuclear power, her Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty commitment notwithstanding.

The process is not likely to stop with Japan: West Germany, Israel and other nations are in the due course of time, likely also to go nuclear. These developments—that is the emergence of a third super power (China) and several 'minor' nuclear powers—will together have the effect of creating a middle range of powers between the supers and the lower level powers. And since the stability dialectics of the supers are likely to continue to inhibit their freedom of action, it is more than likely that the middle powers will then begin to play a greater role than hitherto in international relations—and superimpose their own middle level of confrontation upon any situation of conflict within their spheres of influence. Thus, in Asia, Japan as well as China will exercise the new strategy of multi-level confrontations.

What will be the impact of these developments on India's security attitudes? Unless we recast our present national security policies we are destined to be relegated to a position not even of a middle power but to one of lower power status. In this process not only will all our former aspirations for contributing to international development have to be abandoned, but our very sovereignty will be subordinated to the security interests of great or middle power confrontations.

During the first twenty years of our independence we have had to face a host of security problems, both internal and external. Even our internal problems, such as those in Nagaland, in the Mizo hills or the threats posed by extremists such as the Naxalites, have not been free of external interference. These problems are likely to increase not decrease in the future. A nation of six hundred million people striving to maintain not only its territorial integrity but

also its homogeneous entity must always expect to face a multiplicity of internal and external security problems. And if India aspires to deal with them as a sovereign State, we must develop a national power potential commensurate with our size and population.

National power today is based on a mix of defence and deterrence potential. India therefore has to develop credible military power capable both of defending our territory and dealing with internal security problems (that is, by the use of power) as well as of deterring our external enemies from exercising their threats or aggravating our internal problems. In the context of new strategic developments, our existing military power fulfils this task only partly.

Before we 'proceed' any further, the significance of deterrence as a new concept must be clearly understood. Deterrence as a military notion is nothing new. Under the old traditional strategy, a nation maintained strong conventional forces with an offensive capability to deter an enemy from aggression. But in those days a nation could still embark on an opportunist venture because the possibility of defeat was a tolerable prospect. If an enemy power considered that the stake was greater than the risk, it still undertook a war of aggression as a gamble that might pay off: If it did not, the most that it could lose was some territory, or its independence for a period of time. But its very existence was not at stake. Today, when nuclear retaliation is superimposed upon the conventional threat, deterrence takes on a new significance. It is the stark realisation that a nuclear reprisal could endanger the very existence or viability of a State that gives deterrence its new and absolute character.

Nations that base their security policies only upon defence, that is the use of conventional arms, can no longer be said to exert deterrence. Even if their adversaries are other conventional powers, the superimposition of nuclear influences in dual-level confrontations by nuclear powers compromises their national security goals and therefore their sovereignty.

The alternatives before India are therefore either to expand our military power to the extent that it will, in the Asian context, be regarded as a deterrent force in the modern sense—which means going nuclear; or to continue basing our security policies on a strategy of 'defence' based solely on the use of conventional arms.

Even as it is, our conventional armed forces possess neither the capability nor the credibility that is sometimes claimed for it. If it did, we would not have tolerated foreign troops continuing to occupy thousands of square miles of Indian territory for the past ten years, nor

abdicated our rights to occupy parts of our own territory on the border. Whatever may be the situation vis-a-vis Pakistan, against China we can at best assume a confident defensive posture.

The objections against embarking upon a nuclear programme are mainly moral and economic. Moral arguments against nuclear weapons are based on the assumption that these weapons would, firstly, increase the chances of war and, secondly, in case of war the devastation caused would be much greater. In actual fact, both these assumptions arise from emotional preconceptions rather than logical reasoning. Experience of the last twenty years has clearly proved that in any given confrontation situation the superimposition of nuclear strategy introduces inhibitions that reduce rather than increase both the risk and the scale of violence. Nuclear weapons have a political rather than a military role—deterrence rather than defence. Furthermore, it has also been proved that the inhibitions against their use become more compelling as the number of nuclear powers increase—and become more intricately locked in proliferating situations of nuclear stability. In these circumstances, it is mainly non-nuclear powers that remain exposed to outbreaks of lower key warfare.

As for the economic factor, there has been widespread debate in the country on this aspect and sufficient arguments have been put forward to convince one that India has both the economic and technological resources to embark upon a ten to fifteen year nuclear project which would enable our military power to exert a credible deterrence strategy in the nineteen-eighties. The argument is sometimes raised that in this long-drawn out process of nuclear development India could be subjected to a pre-emptive disarming strike. However, not only is this against historical experience, it is also contrary to the tendencies and inhibitions of nuclear strategy.

So far, all the debates and arguments that have been raised in the country, both official and unofficial, seem to have been based on emotional rather than rational attitudes—either that or overly preoccupied with economic factors. What is required now is an organised series of studies, broad-based on all sections of responsible society as much as on departments of government, taking into account the sophisticated logic and nuances of nuclear strategy. The purpose of such studies should be to determine whether there is any possible way of India enforcing a credible, sovereign, national security policy in the seventies and eighties without acquiring nuclear military power. If not then it is up to the government to take the obvious decision—or surrender our sovereignty.

D. K. PALIT



# Politics of power

ROMESH THAPAR

WHO are the major power?

There are two super powers—the USA and the USSR—so described because they command massive nuclear capability. They have global interests, too, and one interest impinges on the other. They are also for ever concerned as to how policies should unfold in various regions, without even the threat of destruction to themselves.

In Asia, from an Indian sub-continental point of view, there

are two major powers in addition to the super powers who have a direct interest in our region. Japan, packing the power of an industrial giant, and China beginning to assert herself as a result of her impressive self-reliant capacities in the inter-related economic, political and military fields. Japan and China must of necessity be interested in the Indian sub-continent, which exerts influence throughout South and

South East Asia, and in the strategic Indian ocean.

I would also like to throw into our calculations the presence of another kind of force which in the context of general under-development is likely increasingly to impact events on the Indian sub-continent. I refer to the ideological force. In our setting it is not just communist. It can be Islamic. Both these ideologies are rigid, fervent doctrines which command an allegiance spilling over frontiers and blurring them. Within the struggle of the super and major powers, this ideological force is exploited openly or subtly, and we cannot ignore it.

Now, what is the Indian sub-continent?

It is obviously the area covered by India and Pakistan. This is only too clear. But if we are to comprehend the Indian sub-continent's involvements with the major external powers and the problems of Indian security, we cannot do this in isolation from what goes on in Afghanistan, Iran, Ceylon, Burma, the Andamans and Nicobars, the Maldives, Madagascar, the Seychelles and the Himalayan kingdoms. These territories on the periphery of the Indian sub-continent should be of vital concern to us, for developments in any of these areas have an immediate bearing on the Indian sub-continent.

And, finally, what do we mean by security? Security from what, for what? In the course of any argumentation on security we could come to the conclusion that we seek security for our sovereignty, for our sovereign will. Security which sacrifices sovereignty is not security but something else.

Having touched upon the definitions let us proceed to take a look at the power political and security situation in this region. Maybe, we can develop a perspective for the seventies.

In September, 1971, there can be no starting point other than the Indo-Soviet Treaty just concluded. It marks, despite statements to

the contrary, a major turning point in our external relations. But before we analyse this treaty, we must dwell somewhat on what might be called 'the surrounding situation', the backdrop to the treaty.

The war in Vietnam, which has conditioned so much of our thinking on international developments, is now in a state of a stalemate. The stalemate marks the defeat of the US military machine and is bound to release many repercussions within the US system. To salvage some kind of credibility, the US State Department has been compelled to undertake a wide ranging review of its various 'scenarios'—strategic and tactical exercises designed to cope with 'situations'.

What is now emerging is an attempt to refocus on the Soviet Union as the main competitor—and enemy—to the USA. The Kissinger visit to Peking, the projected Nixon visit to China 'in sack-cloth and ashes', so to say, the 'devaluation' of the dollar, the emergency measures being taken to correct the imbalances developing internally in the USA, all these are part of an effort to consolidate the military-industrial complex in the USA against the USSR during a very complex period of transition. The 'style' is impressive, but we must remember the many objectives, including the US presidential election towards the end of 1972.

The Soviet Union has every reason to be disturbed by the trends which have been set in motion. For some years now, the leadership in Moscow has been worried by the increasingly heavy burden of defence spending and military commitments abroad. This confrontation with the USA is unequal in the sense that the Soviet people have to sacrifice much more for military purposes than the American people. Moscow knows that the burden cannot continue unequal.

Then, again, adventures abroad, as in the Arab world, have misfired. The Soviet Union, despite the aid given, has met the fate of

all aid-givers. It has been isolated, and since President Nasser's death a new nationalism seems to be stirring in West Asia. Now the US gambit to strike a deal with a China that does not trust Soviet intentions must cause grave misgivings in Moscow because it makes sensitive the USSR's sprawling border with China, the longest border in the world.

India is naturally seen as a countervailing force against China to be strengthened and consolidated in South and South-East Asia. But the old, discredited techniques prevail—pacts and treaties which have the effect, in fact, of destroying what they set out to achieve. The 'ugly American', the 'hated Yankee' can become the 'ugly Russian' and the 'hated Ruski'. We have had recent examples.

In other words, the super powers, whether of capitalistic or communist persuasion, have not been able to build spheres of friendship and understanding. Tiny elites may serve their purposes, but the broad movements of people are mercurial, and extremely sensitive to being reduced to anything which approximates to junior partner status. China understands this fully, having extricated herself from 'a pact of friendship' with the USSR. Peking designs her internal and external policies as a growing power anxious to become the leader of all those who have been disillusioned in the embrace of the super-powers. Each nuance of policy seeks to emphasise that only those nations are friends of China who refuse to play second fiddle to the super powers—yes, even a country like 'revisionist', socialist Yugoslavia which has departed from the orthodox doctrines of communist practise.

Of course, nuclear China is feared. Traditionally, her attempt to pose as the only major force in Asia suggests a chauvinism which can become extremely dangerous for neighbours, big and small. For India, the experience of the past decade is a warning. Even at the best of times, India's continental unity is treated with reserve by Peking. In other words, single-nation China has little understand-

ing of the multinational coherence of the Indian sub-continent.

Broadly, we can assume that the motivations of the super powers and the interdependent super power will remain more or less constant in the course of the surface transformations that international relations will undergo in the course of the present decade. Only an unforeseen catastrophe or a drastic change in the balance of power could alter these broad motivations. It is not my intention to speculate on the unforeseen. I can only take the trends as they are developing and study their inherent logic on the situation in the Indian sub-continent. I have already defined this area as something more than the land encompassed by the boundaries of the Indian Republic.

A major and profound development has taken place on the Indian sub-continent. The people of East Pakistan, in rebellion against the colonial regime of Islamabad in West Pakistan, have moved beyond the politics of the partition era. The rebellion was legitimised by an extraordinary election which gave the Awami League a fantastic near-unanimous vote. The secular character of the movement in East Pakistan struck at the roots of the partition policies of British imperialism and provided the first faint outlines of a possible communal understanding on the sub-continent proper. The emotions released have to find satisfaction in a settlement which will see the establishment of a sovereign Bangladesh. The actions now being taken will determine what kind of future the sub-continent will create for itself.

A rapid summary of the decision-making during the last four months on Bangladesh throws a flood of light on the questions we are discussing.

In the first phase, towards the end of March—and unexpectedly for us, because we are most neglectful of situations of the most immediate concern to us—developments in East Bengal reached the level of an explosive confront-

tation. Even as the genocide plan of the Pakistan army was put into operation to destroy the elite of this area and to drive millions across the Indian border, we imagined in a very naive kind of way that the fury of an unarmed people was enough to destroy the reinforced formations of the Pakistan army. This euphoria soon passed. But we continued to watch passively. No attempt was made to evolve a response, political and military, to a situation which was bound to spill over our border.

The earlier euphoria persuaded the USSR that we were about to intervene and appropriate messages were sent to the Pakistan Government more or less warning Islamabad of the consequences. The rest of the world saw the event as another Indo-Pakistani squabble, and this fact inhibited Indian policy-making. Within days, Moscow realised that Delhi had no intention of acting militarily and its posture was suitably modified to urge a political solution which would assure peace.

The USA's response to these events is significant. It was more measured and clearly oriented to safeguarding its Pakistani alliance, even though we did not see it. The events in East Bengal were underplayed, and a considerable effort was expended to warn us of a possible Chinese involvement in the event of an Indo-Pakistan armed clash. This latter effort was very effective in paralysing action, particularly in view of the essentially vague statement of the Chinese Government on East Bengal developments.

It is interesting that the initiatives of Moscow, Washington and Peking were in the direction of freezing the situation as it were. India responded, feeling friendless, fearful and fuzzy about objectives. Only the fortunate coincidence of the Pakistani hijacking of an Indian plane, which gave Delhi the justification to ban Pakistan's overflights to Dacca and to complicate the reinforcing of army establishments in East Bengal, was exploited. Otherwise, we

marked time, even though the situation in the East was weighted in our favour. We rationalised by saying that world reaction would be against us if we intervened. Specialists all over the world were amazed at our 'restraint'—the same 'restraint' which was praised by governments interested in the *status quo*.

In the second phase, millions began moving on to our frontiers, seeking refuge from the brutalities of the genocide. Again our lack of preparations and calculations is seized upon by the dominant powers to blunt our will to act against this hidden invasion. We could not close our frontiers to the refugees as this would have meant shooting down those who attempted to cross. No government could survive such an act. So the search began for alternatives. Attention turned to the Mukti Foj. Immediately, inspired propaganda warned of the possibility that the Foj would fall into Maoist control.

As the suppression of the military junta proceeded, vital weeks were lost speculating on the political repercussions of assisting the freedom fight in Bangladesh. The demand for recognition of the Bangladesh Government—designed to push the GOI into action—was described as adventurist in the context of what the GOI was planning. It was made known, to assuage public opinion, that guerrilla activity by the Mukti Foj would intensify and keep the Pakistani militarists occupied until such time as the neutralisation of the Chinese Himalayan threat could be achieved. Then military action by India would take place in order to end the military terror in Bangladesh and make possible the return of some five million refugees. The stepping up of guerrilla activity by the Bangladesh authorities implied, inevitably, the lifting of political control over the Mukti Foj. All those who wanted to take up arms were given the chance to do so. By now, the world was responding to the trauma of Bangladesh.

The staggering size of the refugee problem and the threat of

epidemics did what no propaganda could. A wave of repulsion against Pakistani atrocities offered the promise of relief for the refugees. To numb Indian responses, the impression sponsored was that international action would discipline Pakistan and the refugees would return. India was naturally urged to continue her remarkable restraint in the handling of the situation.

In the third phase, the military junta in Pakistan was able to claim a certain degree of consolidation. President Yahya began to threaten India with dire consequences. More revelations were made about the supply of arms to Pakistan through various sources, including the USA. The USSR resorted to equidistant reportage between the versions supplied by India and Pakistan. China's aid to Pakistan was highlighted. Despite a good international press, India was made to feel isolated. The UN stepped in with the proposal for observers on the border to inhibit Indian action. At this moment, the Kissinger visit was announced. He was reported to be anxious for an on-the-spot investigation of the situation. We now know what the visit was about. But there was a significant follow-up. On his return to the USA, Kissinger summoned our Ambassador and, provided him with some 'research'—that the Chinese would not be passive spectators in an Indo-Pakistani conflict, and the USA would not be able to help India in any way—research already peddled through other parties in India. In other words, India had better watch out. A full circle as it were.

In the fourth phase, the thesis was now orchestrated in various supposedly knowledgeable circles, within India and outside, that the Pakistani military junta might risk war rather than permit India to aid Bangladesh, that China would be an active ally should Pakistan decide to act. The thesis found a ready response in critical policy-making areas in India. The next act of the drama was ordered. An

Indian Kissinger' took off for Moscow and brought back a twenty-year treaty of friendship and cooperation. It was signed with extraordinary speed. Twenty-five years of non-alignment were written off overnight. Nevertheless, we are assured that the treaty strengthens non-alignment. Significantly, the treaty is welcomed both in the USSR and the USA. China doesn't comment. Bangladesh is the first issue to be tackled. It is made clear twenty four hours later in a joint communique on East Pakistan—no longer Bangladesh!—that a political solution is to be sought in the interests of 'all the people of Pakistan'. The war fever recedes. The stock markets recover. There is extraordinary relief throughout India. We are not alone. We have a friend—a super power.

We are in the fifth phase now. We are convincing ourselves that the refugees will have to stay. After all, never in history, have refugees returned to the scene of genocide. We are assuring ourselves that no more refugees will cross the border, even though famine threatens. Reports are circulating about how the Mujib trial might yield a solution to the tangles in Pakistan, that the USSR may seek another level of Tashkent diplomacy. At the same time, guerrilla experts are educating us not to expect in the immediate future any great developments from the Mukti Foj, now named Mukti Bahini.

China watches these developments in silence. The liberation struggle in Bangladesh is passing into new hands, young activists who are risking their lives daily along the waterways of Sonar Bangla. The original nationalist leadership of the Awami League need not remain at the helm. And so—if Pakistan is a US base, India a Soviet ally, why can't Bangladesh look to Peking. The thought begins to find adherents. It is part of the realpolitik of the region.

The phases in the response on Bangladesh are a significant pointer to the interests and policies of

the major powers in the Indian sub-continent and the specific problem of Indian security. Let me pinpoint them. Then we will know where there is convergence and where there is conflict.

The Soviet Union's view has the following major dimensions:

1. The partition of the sub-continent was unfortunate. It prevented the growth of an Asian power capable of balancing the influence of China.
2. The Indian federal polity is viable. It must be strengthened in such a way as to diffuse fissiparous tendencies.
3. India must be equipped to become militarily a counter-vailing force against China. The border problems have made this possible.
4. India should be more active in projecting a sphere of influence in South and South-East Asia. She should not leave China unchallenged. Such neglect would endanger her future. Hence the need for a Soviet-sponsored Asian Collective Security Pact.
5. The consolidation of this region behind the Soviet Union is closely bound up with the emerging Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean. This presence, in the long run, will require military bases and facilities in South and South-East Asia, as also along the African coast. The ideological thrust should be underplayed to assist these ends.
6. West Pakistan is important, as is Afghanistan, for through these territories the Soviet Union could build an easy land access to the countries of the Indian Ocean—that is, after a consolidated presence is established in the Indian Ocean—and into the oceanic islands of the area.
7. East Bengal must be insulated against the pressures of the Maoists—or else Peking

will also enter the Indian Ocean.

The Soviet Union is groping for the formulation of a coherent short-term and long-term policy. The policy-makers in Moscow are 'activists' at a time when the leadership of the USA is licking its wounds.

**T**he USA's view of the sub-continent is different in many respects, even though super power collusion exists at various levels:

1. The partition of the sub-continent marked an acceptance of the reality of Hindu - Muslim animosity. Pakistan is a trusted friend and has genuine fears about Indian revanchism. But India's friendship is not to be discarded. She needs economic assistance and such assistance creates some stability in the area.
2. The strange structure of Pakistan calls for sensitive statecraft. An independent East Bengal would only become a colony of India. A confederal set-up is possibly the best solution for Pakistan.
3. Pakistan is an excellent base for the USA. Her leadership, military and civilian, is practical and coherent unlike the complex Indian elite. The military balance between India and Pakistan has to be relative, but viable. War between them is to be prevented. In this sense, the Chinese presence in the Himalayas is not to be dismissed. It cautions India.
4. Pakistan cannot play a major role in the region, but in the context of Islamic power politics it asserts a major influence in an arc extending from Morocco to Indonesia. India is a gap, but even in the gap there are 60 million Muslims. In other words, Pakistan cannot be abandoned in the interest of short-term gains.
5. The future of this region is largely dependent on the

progress of understanding between the USA and China. In the international balance of power, such an understanding would tremendously weaken the Soviet Union's influence in the region. Again, Pakistan's friendly links with China, and the solution of their border problems, makes Islamabad a factor in the future.

6. Admittedly, the pattern of economic growth, built upon military spending, militates against the Bengal sector, but there is no reason why more should not be done to improve the lot of the Bengalis. This has been a major lapse.
7. East Bengal must be isolated from the pressures of Maoists. Not only must Peking be kept out of this area, but troubles in East Pakistan would spark a break up of West Pakistan's Punjabis, Pathans, Baluchis and Sindhis. These animosities are a common threat to India and Pakistan. This should be driven home.

In other words, the USA's approach to policy-making in the region is very much more established, clear-cut and one might say consistent. National interests are pursued, but there is a greater amount of resource to create the impression of impartiality and generosity.

**C**hina's view is more difficult to decipher, but let me try and summarise a view of it:

1. The partition of the sub-continent was the first inevitable step in the break-up of an artificial entity. The sub-continent will break up into its national groups. Only China is a major nation in Asia.
2. Everything must be done to encourage the break up of the sub-continent, but not openly.
3. India can never be a serious countervailing force against China. She can play this

role only in alliance with the USSR or the USA. Such alliances should spark anger within India, but these reactions may be blunted by hostility over the border troubles with China. India must, therefore, be skilfully devalued in the eyes of Asians to reduce her usefulness to the USA and the USSR.

4. There is likely to be serious conflict between Chinese and Indian interests in South-East Asia, but the skills of the overseas Chinese community should be able to neutralise the Indians politically and commercially. A more active role in East Africa and the islands of the Indian Ocean (particularly Ceylon) is stressed.
5. China's prestige builds because of its successes at home and because of its sovereign presence abroad. This must be maintained now with advanced US technological collaboration. Interference in the internal affairs of other nations must be denounced in public—even if in private it is encouraged. Confidence in China as a friend must be built. South and South-East Asia's suspicions must be dissolved.
6. Friendship with India is difficult, but Pakistan, seeking psychological support in alliances with big powers, is a natural ally in the struggle against Indian intrigues. Verbal military support is enough. A threat is enough. The Indian after 1962 is easily impacted.
7. Nothing must be done to give the impression that China wishes a Maoist Bangladesh. This development will take place as a result of the logic of the liberation movement which will increasingly pass from nationalist to revolutionary cadre. China will then have a base on the vital sub-con-

continent. This will mark the beginning of the break-up of the sub-continent.

China's view is essentially that of an ideologically motivated single-nation State obsessed by its desire to lead Asia. The only possible threat to this desire could come from India in South Asia. Japan is too small in today's context to matter.

At this point, it is necessary to take note of the views of a number of nations which, together, pack a mighty punch—even though, individually, they can be dismissed as inconsequential in the politics of the region. I think it would be short-sighted to imagine that these nations will continue to tread their lonely paths. Increasingly, as the giants converge on the spoils of their power game, and China joins in, these smaller nations might well act for a more collective and sovereign assertion. India can very well be a catalyst in this development if she is not inhibited by the new Indo-Soviet Treaty.

Let me run over some of the possibilities:

1. Japan, following the US financial squeeze against her export trade, and viewing with some alarm the Sino-US detente, cannot possibly carry on as before. New alignments with massive commercial ramifications will be sought, preferably with regions still free of super power involvements. Even the USSR and China are probing possibilities with Japan. But India remains aloof.
2. In South-East Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines are ready for independent thinking and action. But India remains distant.
3. East Africa moves in the same direction, though with greater suspicions of the motives of others. But India does not move.
4. The European Community

must be wondering too about its future in Asia, particularly industrial nations like France and Germany. But India is content to act the spectator.

5. Australia and Canada also cannot be lumped together with the UK or the USA in discussions on Asia. But India does not enter into a dialogue.

The position which is developing suggests that whereas the super powers and the aspiring super power are moving to demarcate areas of influence and control in our part of the world, new options are opening for India at this critical time. Unfortunately, the hastily organised Indo-Soviet Treaty, has put a brake on these developments, but if we are to build a security system which is sovereign and not at the mercy of super power calculations we will have to do some total thinking on our internal economic consolidation and our independent external presence. We must, in other words, seek to become another centre of power. I shall try to fix some of the priorities and leave the rest to you.

1. Bangladesh cannot be allowed to fester. The refugee waves can destroy political stability in India. If we remain passive spectators, it may become necessary to insulate East India to prevent the collapse of the rest of the economy. A sovereign Bangladesh, established as speedily as possible, is now a vital national task. The joint communique with the Soviet Union suggests otherwise. A slow liberation movement will not solve our refugee problem and will open the way to deeper external intrigues on our sub-continent.
2. With the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, we have entered the power game. Our immediate need is to fill the gaps in our collaborative economy to give us some degree of self reliance. These gaps must be filled by the Soviet Union, much in the

same way as a balanced industrial base was provided for China. We cannot allow ourselves to remain at the mercy of aid givers and suppliers. A compact of friendship must create the basis for equality.

3. In the context of equality, an immediate decision is needed to embark on a nuclear armament programme. Its scale and depth are complex problems, but we can no longer remain outside the nuclear game. We would then condemn ourselves to junior partnership—and lose our "presence" in the Indian Ocean. What's more, we must establish this presence most firmly and with skill. The recent Ceylon eruption was a warning.
4. We must search out alliances with non-super powers, but powers who possess industrial capacity and strategic facilities. A series of alliances could again open the options closed by the Indo-Soviet Treaty. And we should not neglect the possibility of an equation with China. It may provide a key to our new power role.
5. At home, an austere mass line to mobilise resources, to strengthen national morale, to break defeatism, demoralisation and cynical apathy will have to be sketched. The mass line is very different from the euphoric socialism sponsored by the ruling party. It is in the nature of a democratic cultural revolution comparable to the happenings in China and because it is democratic in a federal set up it is extremely difficult to carry through.

This should be the new perspective before us. To work it out would require immense intellectual effort, physical planning and dedicated implementation. Many pressure groups, sponsored by interested powers, will seek to confuse and blunt such an effort. They must be defeated by sovereign men and women.

# Planning for defence

D. SOM DUTT

WE live in exciting times. There is talk of another possible war with Pakistan, and our relations with China being what they are, the task of safeguarding our national security takes on added proportions. We have been reminded (indeed repeatedly assured) that our preparedness to meet any military challenge will not find us wanting. Despite similar assurances in the past, our showing in the sphere of military action in 1962 and even in 1963 did not come up to expectations. It is to be hoped that at least this bit of history will not be allowed to repeat itself. The fighting ability of our troops is not in question. The reasons generally ascribed to our inadequate military performance has been that equipment has been scarce, and not sophisticated enough for the purpose. Could it not also be that our planning has been at fault? Has our planning adhered too closely to the orthodox? What is the process by which policy is made?

These are some of the questions that the average citizen is apt to ask himself. The more informed are keen to discuss whether there is adequate awareness among the policy makers of the developments that have taken place in international policy making and strategy during the past decade; whether instead of security being based on the use of power, it

should not be based on 'deterrence'; whether we are prepared to accept remaining as a low level power dependent on others, and why we cannot develop national power commensurate with our size and potential. This paper makes no claim to providing the answers. It attempts briefly an examination of the questions posed.

Of the many factors that must be taken into account in decision making on defence matters, some of the more important relate to achieving harmony in civil-military relationships, the dovetailing of defence policy into foreign policy, and arriving at a consensus of opinion with the views of the Services. Additionally, since we do live in the nuclear age, irrespective of whether we have the economic or technical wherewithal, we cannot but make a deliberate evaluation of the technological advances that have been made in weapons systems and the methods of conducting war. Has our government machinery measured up to this task?

A quick answer is arrived at in S. S. Khera's book, *India's Defence Problem*. He has said "There has failed to emerge any really integrated matrix of defence doctrine, policy, or strategy, or fiscal and financial planning in relation to defence. . . . There have been a number of 'ad hoc' decisions as each emergency compels a deci-

sion, everyone at the higher decision making points being too busy to devote time to, or have inclination for it.' Having been in the Cabinet as Secretary, Khera should know. And what might be the reasons for this state of affairs?

Our machinery was patterned on the British model. This meant a committee system of working within the Ministry of Defence. The British did not evolve their system without some difficulty, and criticism of the end product was severe. For example, Correlli Barnett in his book *Britain and her Army*, when referring to the second world war, said 'The British Government declared war at a time of military unpreparedness to help Poland, which it was geographically incapable of aiding. A splendid example of how not to mesh foreign policy with strategy. . . It was hoped that if the allies were not nasty to the Germans, they would not attack the allies. While this bloodless stalemate continued, the allied blockade would bring down the German economy. While the allies sheltered behind the Maginot Line, the Board of Trade economists would win the war.'

Again, in 1949 Cyril Falls said in an article, 'We cannot afford to give the partisan of any single method of warfare his head, and stake our destinies upon his having guessed right when he has never done so before. That is why the Ministry of Defence was set up. It was to exercise a general control over the Service Ministries, the final court of appeal on aspects of grand strategy being the Prime Minister. Unfortunately, such evidence as is to be had, suggests that it has not so far fully carried out its mission. A machinery of control which appears to function but does not actually do so, gives a false impression of security and well being. The conception is sound, and it ought not to be difficult to improve the execution. Without this safeguard, our military policy runs the risk of being swayed by impulsive and ill-considered argu-

ments, or alternatively, of being moulded by the last resort of those who cannot make up their minds, a mechanical and quantitative compromise between conflicting demands.' It is possible that these criticisms will find a responsive chord in the minds of those who feel that we, on our part, could have done better than we did.

If in Britain the 'frock-coats' and the 'brass-hats' were to be at logger heads, we did not escape that experience either. We deemed it necessary to make it manifest that civil control over the armed forces was an imperative, although this principle had never been questioned at any time. That the process led to the progressive lowering of the status and position of Service officers *vis-a-vis* their civilian counterparts was to be expected. Even if animus was not generated, stress and strain were certainly not absent. If the civilian officials were not militarily oriented in their thinking, the Service officers having been nurtured in an apolitical atmosphere, tended to restrict themselves exclusively to the military and professional aspects of the problems being discussed. And the political masters of both the officials and Service officers had to deal with a vast organisation of whose inner workings they had little knowledge.

Foreign policy is the plank on which to construct defence policy. If within the Defence Ministry there was lack of harmony, asking for and obtaining the views of the External Affairs Ministry on our national interests, and intentions towards other countries, was not made any easier when it is remembered that for long years the Prime Minister himself was virtually Foreign Minister. Bearding lions in their dens is fraught with danger at the best of times.

'Defence policy has only one purpose to be served, and that is to act as the servant of foreign policy.' So said McNamara when Secretary for Defence in the United States. The British have held the same contention. It is curious that having accepted the

British pattern of working, we did not prepare White Papers on defence. It is possible that our defence planners found our foreign policy too nebulous a base on which to construct defence. Planners, particularly those who took the pragmatic view that conflicts can and do break out for reasons beyond our control, were not incorrect in assuming that the accent should have been placed on physically preparing for war, rather than on merely trying to prevent it. Their lot was made even more complex, because they were required to reconcile what was politically desirable with the need to exercise the utmost prudence in military preparedness lest of itself it become provocative. Simultaneously, they were obliged to bow to the dictates of closely held purse strings.

Their troubles were not to end here. Ironically, defence policy has perforce to be based on long term considerations. (A new weapons system may take nothing less than ten years in which to reach the hands of the users.) Foreign policy and economics lend themselves to short term evaluation. Whatever the difficulties that this may present, the external affairs department must define in some close detail the nature and magnitude of the threats that the country may have to face up to. Is it rubbing salt into the wound to suggest that in fact, no foreign policy decisions can be taken without a previous understanding of the military implications? In short, integration of effort within departments of government is essential. Perhaps it was this aspect of the matter that Khera was critical of.

The question has been posed as to whether security should be based on the use of power, or on a system of 'deterrence'. Put in another way, this really suggests that we be permitted to allow weapons to dictate strategy. Strategy is, in fact, policy. Defined more fully, strategy 'is a series of decisions which are foreseen, and are made in the light of the possible reactions both rational



and irrational to these decisions, followed by action which does not exclude recourse to armed force.' In a narrower military sense, strategy is the concept of the use of battle to further the aims of war, but 'no matter how important the political objective, of itself such objective cannot be a despot's legislator, and must adapt itself to the nature of the means at its disposal.'

No part of this kind of thinking can be taken to mean that we allow the weapons themselves to dictate policy. We cannot of course ignore that industrialization and technological advances have increased the power for destruction to a frightening degree, while differing ideologies have in some ways made a mockery of previously accepted codes of behaviour. Uncompromising attitudes and unlimited wars have become the fashion. To meet this situation, modern terminology has found its place. Strategy can for example, be Containment (of China and communism); Deterrence (making it clear to the enemy the price he will have to pay for aggression); Graduated deterrence (the dread of all out nuclear war makes an increase by stages of the use of destructive weapons more meaningful); Continental or Insular strategy (do we carry the war to others, or restrict ourselves to our own periphery). The popular terms 'nuclear' and 'weapons' strategy, find no place in strategy as such.

**M**odern weapons have reached a stage of development bordering on the fantastic, and this applies equally to nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. Together with the technologist, therefore, the expert, the academic, and the analyst have all gained prominence. Indeed, they have come into their own. The stage has already been reached, perhaps, when policies are deemed to be justified for the sole reason that they conform to the findings of experts. If ever there was a place to sound a warning, then this is it. In the making of decisions, it is judgement that must be exercised, and this is best left to

the unprejudiced mind of the knowledgeable layman who follows the dictate of sound common sense.

**I**t has been suggested that the alternative which India faces is either to expand our military power to the extent that it will, in the Asian context, be regarded as a deterrent, or retain a strategy of defence based on conventional weapons. In effect, this means our becoming a nuclear power. It is not clear, however, what difference exists between a deterrence in Asia or elsewhere. It is presumed that by Asia we mean South and South East Asia, China, Japan, and superimposed on these areas, the presence of the two super powers. Our horizon is very wide.

The less powerful States within the region comprise three elements. Those in alliance with the United States; those who still have affiliations with Britain; and the uncommitted States. Instability has been endemic in this part of Asia. New borders have been created between the smaller States; irredentism has not been forgotten; and there are no specific links which bind the elements together, not excluding an agreed view on China's ambitions and intentions. The building of a countervailing balance to the might of China, if that be the intention, is extremely difficult.

China is determined to achieve great power status. As her nuclear build-up progresses, a situation of strategic instability will arise, and a triangular situation will be much more difficult to live with than the existing two power one. China's confrontation with the Soviet Union will continue for some time yet. It therefore suits China to ease her tensions with the United States. The 'Ping-Pong' diplomacy had some point. Should the balance of terror situation be disturbed, a renewal of the arms race between the two super powers could come about. Japanese fears would then increase.

As it is, Japan, already not at ease with the Soviet Union, can-

not ignore the existing danger of being held hostage by China in any Sino-American confrontation. For a long time Japan has been 'pacifist by way of pennance, and hesitant by reason of prudence.' She sees no reason now to continue an existence which can be likened to 'a life assurance for which premiums have to be paid continually'. Japan could well become the fourth military nuclear power in Asia. It is most unlikely, therefore, that we will be able to restrict our strategic thinking, particularly if we are to arm ourselves with nuclear weapons, to the Asian context. This is not to suggest that we take on the super powers as well!! It is to point out that we would be greatly out of touch with reality if we were to believe that our development of a nuclear deterrent would reverberate locally in Asia alone.

**B**asically, the argument for a nuclear weapon rests on anxiety regarding our security, and a yearning for the prestige that this would confer. A case can be made out for an Indian nuclear weapons programme now, if we are certain that China has developed her nuclear potential in order to expand her territory within Asia, rather than to deter attack by the super powers, and that India is the only country that is confronting China. It is indeed frustrating to have to continue with a defence policy which merely reacts to aggression as and when this is visited on us, and then only with the negative objective of defending ourselves as best we can till the next occasion. This is a wasteful form of strategy. A nuclear capability would deter our adversaries from undertaking aggression with the impunity that has been practised so far.

However, it must be remembered that we will be obliged to achieve at the very least, parity with China in our nuclear armoury. We must also have the ability not only to absorb a first strike, but also to retaliate meaningfully. The connotations of achieving such ambitions are ob-

vious. We will also have to be in a great hurry, because of the lag that exists between China's state of preparedness and our present state, which is still that of indecision. It is beyond the layman's ken to say whether this lag is not already insurmountable.

**T**o remain a powerless entity perpetually on the defensive among the world's powers is unpalatable. At least two questions do arise, however. The first is whether we are prepared for a complete breakaway from our traditional behaviour pattern, and secondly, a modification of moral values. In other words, we become un-Indian. So far, any influence which India has exercised outside her shores, has been primarily cultural, and not the outcome of economic or physical pressure. Our thought process has been essentially pacific. Presumably, neither of these concepts can be followed in the future. It is best that we face up to this reality from the very start, lest we be accused of hypocrisy later.

Regarding moral values, this is a more complex issue. Any strategy of nuclear deterrence demands the acceptance of holding whole cities and non-combatant peoples as hostage. No instrument of force, as such, is evil. The use we put it to, can be evil. To kill the innocent will no longer constitute murder. Admittedly, it is the non-use and not the use of the nuclear weapon which has meaning. We may choose to salvage our conscience by resolving that we will never have to use the weapon. Can we also blind ourselves to the fact, however, that in this world, megalomaniacs will continue to appear in power in the future as they have in the past, fully capable of pressing the fatal trigger which spells disaster?

There is little consolation we can draw from the fact that at least China has declared that she will not be the first to strike. An agreement on a 'no first-strike' by two confronting nations enhances the value, so to speak, of deterrence. Should one of the powers break the agreement, the second

must have no compunction in replying without any kind of discrimination. So far as our conscience is concerned, therefore, we are again where we were before.

Lastly, to deny the effectiveness of conventional weapons out of hand, is reminiscent of the carpenter who blames his tools for his shoddy work. We cannot be the first to start a war, but there is no earthly reason why we cannot prepare fully, both mentally and militarily, with conventional weapons, for the contingency when having been attacked, we are capable of administering an object lesson to those who choose to initiate war. Our two adversaries can be China and Pakistan, either singly or in collusion.

If we are convinced that China will invade India—and this will need a great deal of substantiation—it should be remembered that others have stood up to similar danger with great fortitude. The example is Vietnam. If their trial has been a long one and a sore experience, they have not succumbed because they have had the courage to live with it. It is doubtful if nuclear weapons would have paid them dividends, or their reputation and prestige been enhanced had they possessed them.

So far as Pakistan is concerned, the degree of alacrity with which we have accepted cease-fire proposals previously, has been unfortunate. Any advantage that adopting this course may have conferred on us was ephemeral. We certainly lost the advantage of administering an object lesson to that country. If, on the other hand, we were not capable of so doing, then the assurances of our being militarily prepared had little meaning, and were hollow.

**I**n sum, it would appear that our machinery for decision making has not been geared to the demands of a fast moving world in which the output of technological advances require not only a pooling of political, military, economic, and scientific knowledge,

but also that the minds of civilians charged with defence matters be militarily oriented and, equally, that Service officers be educated beyond the confines of their profession. A compartmental approach within government to the solution of problems cannot lead to integrated planning. Foreign policy and national interests have to be spelled out specifically to form a basis for defence planning.

It is incorrect to predetermine what we can afford economically in the way of military preparedness, without much relation to where we wish to go as a nation. We have perhaps, placed too great an accent on the word defence. This word gets related unconsciously to a defensive posture, whereas our policy may well demand offensive operations of war, once battle is joined, to fulfil our needs. To accept somewhat hastily cease-fire proposals when they are made signifies, among other things, a woefully insufficient degree of military preparedness.

**I**n assessing the advantages of nuclear military power over conventional weapons, or working out a preference between a policy of using power and one of nuclear deterrence, or considering how best we can gain stature among world powers, is in effect determining strategy. The word 'strategos' was the title given to the chief political and military leader of the State. The implication is clear. Strategy has associations beyond the field of battle. It simply cannot be reduced almost solely to an evaluation of weapons systems.

This paper did not set out to find answers to the questions posed at the start of the paper. If the reader has persevered with his reading so far, he can have the consolation that he is in no better or worse position than the decision maker, in arriving at the answers. The lot of the decision maker is an unenviable one. He gets only a tithe of the time that planners may have in considering the problem, and yet the possibility of failure attending his decision can never be excluded.

# Nuclearisation

JAGAN CHAWLA

WHETHER India should go nuclear or not is a political decision which has to be taken at the highest level with the utmost secrecy and with all the expertise available to government—and not through public debates and seminars! At the same time, one would like to question the type of expertise that is utilised by government. I should like to confine my remarks to the scientific and organisational implications of India going nuclear.

When we talk of going nuclear, we must examine the existing organisations for scientific research in the country, the industrial base, the present status of the aerospace, electronic and defence industries and, in general, the technological competence required for India to produce nuclear weapons and the associated delivery systems.

We are aware that a chain of research laboratories under CSIR has not produced much impact on the industrial development of the country. Even conventional weapons are being produced under

licence and several expensive defence laboratories have not evolved any weapons of indigenous design nor has much work been done on producing the essential raw materials required for defence industries.

It is, therefore, essential to examine whether we can go nuclear in a short time with the existing set-up, what are the drawbacks, and how they can be overcome by reorganising and restructuring the existing machinery.

Until recently, the top advisory body on science and technology available to the Union Cabinet was the Committee on Science and Technology (COST). It consisted of fifteen members. Five of them were physicists, three agricultural scientists, one medical scientist, one rubber chemist, one nuclear technologist, one statistician, one economist, one mining engineer and a civil servant. It is to be noted that many of the members on the COST were appointed in an ex-officio capacity; they had other full time responsibilities.

Furthermore, all the fields of science and technology were not represented on the Committee. For example, the crucial areas of aeronautics and rocketry, electronics, and metallurgy were unrepresented. There were only two technologists out of fifteen members and only two non-government members.

COST had a very small secretariat and very few scientists and technologists in the country knew of its existence, composition and functions. It was more or less an elite club of scientists who carefully avoided stepping on one another's toes and many used the club for advancing themselves.

It has recently been announced that COST is to be replaced by a National Committee on Science and Technology (NCST). One does not know what the functions and composition of NCST would be, so it is rather premature to comment on it. It is, essential, however, that such a top advisory body should have representatives on it from all the major fields of science and technology. It is also essential that it should have a full time chairman, some full time membership like that of the Planning Commission and a competent secretariat.

Under this re-structured body, there should be National Committees in each field or groups of related fields who should lay down policy guidelines, sanction funds and evaluate the results of research in their respective fields. For example, today aeronautical and space research is being carried out separately by Defence, CSIR, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under the DAE, Civil Aviation and the universities, each with its own advisory body.

Another serious malady is that aeronautical and space research has been under scientists not trained in these fields. With a single National Committee on aero-space research there would be better coordination and utilisation of available manpower and funds, quicker and better results and less

of empire-building and politics. There should be such national committees in all other fields.

The full time chairman of such an expanded and re-structured body should be elected by its members for a three year term rather than nominated by the government. He should also be a scientist/technologist of national and international standing with considerable experience in the guidance and management of scientific and industrial research.

At present practically all scientific research is being done in government laboratories, and our so-called senior scientists have more or less reproduced the hierarchical set up of the administrative services in the scientific department also. Our scientists have been designated as junior, senior and principal scientific officers, they have their pay scales, departmental promotion committees, recruitment through the UPSC, and annual confidential reports are written on their work.

This system may give a mediocre scientist a tremendous sense of security but is hardly conducive to initiative and healthy competition among scientists. A country which aspires to progress through the massive application of science and technology ought to give a better deal to its scientists and technologists and should shed the colonial administrative machinery for the management of science and technology.

I am of the view that government must de-governmentalise scientific research. The government should lay down policies and well-defined objectives, provide funds and possess an efficient machinery for evaluating the results of research, but it should not run research laboratories as part of a vast, slow-moving bureaucracy. It should let the laboratories function as registered societies to allow staff to be hired on a contract basis, with freedom to hire and fire. The salaries should be commensurate with one's worth and performance—and one need not be fitted into a pay scale! There should also be some

privacy about one's pay as in the private sector. This would also allow scientists freedom to move from one laboratory to another, rather than simply climb the ladder of seniority by yesmanship.

One of the major criticisms of the national laboratories under the CSIR is that they are completely divorced from the industries which they are supposed to serve. Further, even when they have developed a process on a laboratory scale, they have failed to pass on the technology to industry to enable it to productionise the item of equipment. The same criticism applies in equal measure to laboratories under the Defence R & D Organisation. They are physically divorced from the production units and are administratively separate.

Since 1963, a large number of steering committees have been in existence for individual projects to bring about coordination between production, research and development, and inspection. This clearly shows that the present administrative set-up is not suited to ensure the coordination that is essential for defence production. I am, therefore, of the view that research laboratories under the CSIR and Defence should be integrated with their related production units and with fully autonomous corporations in the public sector.

For India to go nuclear, she must be able to produce a nuclear or thermonuclear bomb and related delivery systems, that is, bombers and missiles. Let us examine what is India's competence today in these fields.

India's policy has been to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only and we are restricted to such uses by our agreements with the USA and Canada on the supply of fissionable materials. Government have stated more than once that our policy is under constant review, but that does not release us from the agreements entered into with the USA and Canada. In this connection, we remember the pressure from the USA to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Thus a change in

policy can be meaningful only when we can produce our own fissionable materials from indigenous thorium.

Once that is done, I am of the view that India can produce a nuclear bomb as the result of a crash programme. Much will depend on government's decision that we be a militarily strong nation rather than a camp follower. It will also require some drastic changes in the scientific set-up of the country. The Department of Atomic Energy will have to be relieved of its responsibility for space research and communication satellites in order to concentrate all its resources on the development of the bomb. This cannot be done by the Chairman of AEC being abroad most of the time.

As for the delivery systems, the picture is more dismal. One way is to deliver the bomb by a conventional bomber, but I doubt if the bombers in our fleet are capable of doing so. As to the indigenous development of missiles, the picture is still more dismal. Our amateur missile designers, under the guidance of generalist scientists and semi-educated military generals, have not been able to successfully develop an anti-tank missile. We have been informed that we are producing one under licence. Such a missile uses only visual and simple optical guidance. The air-to-air missiles are again being produced under licence and the ground-to-air missiles have been acquired from abroad.

**P**roduction under licence does not mean that we are dependent only for design, but also for essential raw materials, components, systems and sub-systems. Thus indigenous production is virtually an assembly system.

The Space Research Organisation has been releasing unguided weather rockets. As for the satellite programme, we expect to launch a purely Indian satellite only around 1980. That is, we will be ten years behind China in spite of our collaboration with a super power which is now getting closer to China. China has successfully tested and developed intermediate

range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) equipped with nuclear warheads. Thus the whole of northern India is vulnerable to attacks by Chinese IRBMs. As for as the ICBMs, it may take China another year or so to master the problems of re-entry and terminal guidance.

Thus, if we intend to catch up with China and be a military power, we shall have to re-vamp the entire organisational pattern of the aero-space industry and its research base. The aircraft industry is being managed by General Duty Pilots of the Indian Air Force for the past decade and a half and aeronautical, missile and space research is being headed by those who were not trained in these fields. This is hardly the way to make progress.

**A**nother malady has been too much self-imposed secrecy in all matters connected with defence, due more to our weakness and waste of public funds than to any genuine reasons of security because after all we are producing most of the defence equipment under licence. Government has also hemmed itself in by a commitment that everything for defence should be produced in the public sector. We must make use of the entire scientific and industrial potential of the country and be bold enough to admit our past mistakes rather than be vindictive.

The aero-space industry needs a through revamping in management, personnel and re-grouping of research organisation. If such a bold step is taken by the Prime Minister, I am sure that in ten years time we can be a self-sufficient nuclear military power. The frustration afflicting the younger scientists and technologists will also evaporate.

All this has to be backed by a national will to get militarily strong. The leadership provided by the politicians has to belong to the second half of this twentieth century—that is, to the nuclear era of advanced science and technology and not to a primitive society. We can take some lessons from the small, young and vibrating nation of Israel.

# War making

SUGATA DASGUPTA

WHETHER a 'hawk' or a 'dove', a 'peacenik' or a 'bomb lobby', the first concern of every citizen is to discover the most suitable strategy for the defence of his land. And the question of the nuclear weapon is surely to be examined in this context with due care. I also agree with the poser that 'so far all the debates and arguments (in this matter) have been based on emotional rather than the rational' consideration and have therefore not certainly been helpful to the debate. But does one realise that the 'myth' of the 'Bomb', calculated to whip up almost a hysteric urge for the weapon, has been solely responsible for it? And what with China going nuclear and America admitting that one of the reasons for which it wishes to defreeze Sino-American relations is that China is a nuclear power, the mention of the 'Bomb' is now like a 'mantra'. It is needed not

merely for defence but as the 'cure all' to our many ailments, as also for the 'instant' restoration of our lost 'manhood'.

Such an atmosphere is not conducive to dispassionate thinking. Neither is it possible in a situation like this objectively to explore the possible contributions of alternative policies and probably even to say that there is an alternative! The situation becomes worse confounded every day and military leaders too join a lobby held so long by the uninformed citizens, economists and social scientists of various description. The excitement then runs high, so much so that the staff of the Planning Commission got infuriated one day soon after China had exploded the bomb and held a meeting to insist that the 'weapon' was needed at any cost even if there was no delivery system to put it to use.

Why not? After all, the Planning Commission has, for long, been used to the construction of 'plans' which couldn't be delivered to its clientele; so why hesitate to follow the same strategy in the country's defence as well?

Jokes apart, the time has come when all serious thinking people should apply their mind to this rather tricky problem of India's defence. What really is the best way of guaranteeing the future safety of our country not only from generations of invaders but in the immediate future, here and now? As China remains poised at the eastern frontier, and Pakistan slaughters the freedom fighters of Bangla-Desh and shows India the mailed fist, the problem assumes a special urgency. Could the 'Bomb' 'do it'? It could? And even without being used? Then 'do it' by all means.

But could it really? That is the question. Let us see what the poser has to say about it. The central point that the poser makes is a firm plea for arming India with the nuclear weapon. For, one can't seek any other nuclear power's umbrella, as such dependence will mean the erosion of our own sovereignty. The other point made in this connection is that we must make the bomb even if there is no war just now! For, the potential itself will 'deter' (which in the lay man's language probably means 'frighten') all others and prevent recurrence of any military adventurism along our borders. The poser also remembers with some nostalgia that during Nehru's time India had played 'a great power role', although it had no such potential then, due only to the 'moral force' of the concept of non-alignment.

In the new set up, when the contours of world politics are changing and more nations are acquiring nuclear power, a new policy suited to the time is necessary. That policy must discard the old which was one of waging only 'conventional' and/or limited wars on one or two fronts. The need now is to mobilise all our resources—economic and technolo-

gical—to embark upon 'a ten to fifteen years nuclear project which would enable our military power to exert a credible deterrence strategy in the nineteen eighties'. Such power is necessary, the argument goes, not only to revive India's international status from the existing 'low power' position to a step higher but also for dealing with the internal dissenters such as the Nagas and Mizos and probably also (this the poser does not say) a section of Kashmiris, Bengalees, Keralites, Andhras, Biharis and so on!

The central theme is then 'power' and not 'defence'—and 'deterrence' is not so much for the defence of the motherland as for acquisition of 'power' in the international arena. The bid indeed is to help India step into a new role of 'power'. In a world where the main potential points of 'power' are increasingly being eroded due to 'mutual strategic inhibitions' where a great many 'middle' rang-ers are already coming to the fore and where the international scene no longer permits 'absolute' hegemony even of the super powers, much less of any others, it is strange that someone from India should still be so obsessed with 'power'.

It is not only that India, Gandhi's India, Tagore's India, and Nehru's India may have some ethical objection to a conscious use of 'power' in dealing with sister nations but that power is verily no longer there where one is seeking it so late in the day. For, power does not grow out of the barrel of a gun or for that matter neither from nuclear weapons. It lies, on the contrary in the goodwill of the people. It lies in their welfare. Similarly, national security and viability depends on the capacity to win friends in the international community and not in dominating the neighbours or in frightening them away with postures of defence or deterrence.

The meaning and significance of the term 'power' is indeed changing. The power of a nation is no longer equal to the power of its

army. It grows in direct proportion to the intensity of integration of a people with the nation's goals and aspirations. Such power can be obtained, therefore, only through a rapid reversal of the process of alienation, one that keeps the 'power' elites of all nation's estranged from their rank and file. A nation's strength is thus determined by its ability to project its goals as of universal value to its neighbours and citizens alike. The more universal the goal and ethical the ideal, the greater shall be the power and influence of a nation.

The other theory of 'low', 'middle' range and 'super' powers is equally out of date. It is an exploded dogma even in terms of the traditional connotation of the concept. The world is in fact divided horizontally in four parallel 'systems' of power, each one of which, despite their changing relations that bring some systems closer to each other sometimes, are aspiring for the 'hegemony' of the entire world. Neither could they be graded vertically in terms of the quantum of the weapons they possess; as all of them draw sustenance and strength not only from their arms but also from the 'influence' they wield over a number of other nations. Two of these are headed by Soviet Russia and the People's Republic of China, one by the United States of America and the fourth, comprising the nations of Western Europe, has become somewhat loose and dispersed now since the decline of de Gaulle. There is every reason to believe, however, that western Europe has not given up its plans of 'superism' and could soon re-enter the fray once more, may be under the leadership of the two Germanies. For all one knows, the recent Sino-American detente aimed at the isolation of Russia may help the quicker integration of Europe and, working in reverse gear, even end the isolation of Soviet power on the continent.

The four 'systems' contain each other in their own territories and fight their battles in the third world. The main endeavour of

each of these groups is to spread its ways of life in the latter not so much by the raised brow but with the help of influence. This influence is the 'aid' they offer. It is a well known fact, in this connection, that certain areas of the world which are the least armed have also been the most violent and war 'prone' in recent years. Such areas have, incidentally, also been the least developed and, consequently, claimants to aid of various magnitudes and descriptions. The 'systems' themselves have not, however, been at war with each other as they prefer to stand behind those of the third world who ceaselessly beg aid and wage mini-wars in their own territories.

**T**wo more issues need to be sorted out before one can fully comprehend the dynamics of war making and national defence in the third world, matters with which any decision concerning nuclear power is so intimately related. First of all, there is the new question of intra-societal pulls in each of the countries who comprise the 'four' systems, and then there are international relations.

These 'super' nations, barring China, have already reached such a high peak of social development in terms of the standard of living of their people that the war designs of the elite of these countries get easily thwarted due to their own intra-societal strains. No American or westerner would thus like to barter his social and economic securities and opt for a war without a word of protest! It is for this reason that even if a Nixon declares war to help Cambodia, an 'acre of demos' gathered on the White House lawn could force the President to call the troops back. And it is precisely for this reason that even a Henry Kissinger has to run across the mountains in a dramatic bid to make Chou En-lai a friend. No country in the western world, Soviet Russia included, which has achieved a high rate of development and growth, would thus be prepared to go to war under ordinary circumstances.<sup>1</sup> It is this pull, this intra-societal dynamic of

the growing welfarism of the western world, and not the inventory of weapons in the armoury of their Generals, that makes any mutual combat between these systems redundant.

It is exactly the lack of it—that is the state of underdevelopment of the nations of the third world and their dependence on the 'four' systems for aid and development—that sets the ecology of the third world in flames. There is, it seems, indeed a direct correlation between underdevelopment, intra-societal violence and aid policies with frequent outbursts of mini-wars in this area. For, aid plays a significant role in the development of the 'personality' of the recipient nations and in determining their social and military policies. It makes and has indeed made only a handful of people in each country (OECD Report, 1969) richer and stronger leaving the vast majority of others bitter and impoverished. Consequently, aid has drawn the elite of the recipient nations closer to some of their benefactors while estranging, at the same time, the masses from the former.

**T**he bitter and the hungry certainly breathe violence today and bring instability to the young polities of the third world. The aid givers then get back to swim in the same troubled waters and the indigenous 'elite' may, for a variety of reasons, such as to divert the attention of a frustrated people away from their shores or to win over the dissidents, decide to march their armies across other's frontiers or even stage armed invasions in one's own territory as in Pakistan in search of vain internal stability.

That is the dynamics of 'war making' in the third world. The quantum of weapons one has cannot and has not in the past acted as a 'deterrent' on such highly inflammable intra-societal infra-

structures. Even an 'Egypt' did not hesitate to go to war with a Britain—and no non-nuclear power would even today if it were necessary to vindicate its honour, whatever the military status of the enemy. It is not a question of seeking protection from one nuclear power against the others; the logic of survival itself would restrain most nuclear powers from acting in haste as also help in containing each other.

**I**f these are the dynamics of 'war making', let us then now look for the recipe. How should India and, for that matter, any nation like ours defend itself? The best thing is to avoid a war and the best way to put a moratorium on all wars is to ensure a rapid, revolutionary transformation in the structure of the society. This means a quick change in the standards of life of the people. And the end is to be achieved without 'aid' or in a manner so that the aid giving nations cannot interfere with the intra-societal dynamics of the third world or tie us to their apron strings.

The programmes of development, of course, require a substantial diversion of resources from defence to development and, in other words, the rationale of defence would require that the priority goes to the war against the five internal giants. Such endeavours, if carried out on a war footing, would have many advantages. They would, for example, prevent the alienation of the masses from the elite, decrease intra-societal violence, usher in internal harmony and help in the emergence of integrated national 'goals' which would give a common focus and weal to the country as a whole. A nation thus backed to the hilt by an entire people would certainly be the most invincible. The reverse would mean a people divided against itself with an elite armed to the teeth, maybe even with borrowed nuclear power, as is amply demonstrated by the Frankenstein of Yahya's Pakistan of today.

If a comprehensive programme for development and structural

1. For a fuller treatment of the subject see Sugata Dasgupta: 'Social Work and Peace Research' published in *Sarva Seva Sangh* Monthly Newsletter (Special Number on Peace) Vol. 2 No. 1 January 1968 pp. 22-24



change neglected so long in our country provides the best guarantee for the defence of the nation, another matter of equal relevance has, likewise, been shelved so far. This is the task of bringing into being a 'fifth' system or a nuclear free zone of Asian nations. It brooks no delay. When there were only two 'super' powers in the world, the theory of non-alignment had its value not only in keeping clear of the two but also in bringing them closer from time to time. Today, the two have broken into four. And while they wilfully refrain from shedding their own blood, they certainly resolve to continue their wars in the territory of the third world. Is it not only plain and rational, in such circumstances, that the nations of the third world should see through the game and, instead of preparing to fight each other, set up a new system or bloc of nations and ask the 'four' to keep out of this territory? Ceylon has already asked for an 'Indian Ocean' bloc.

What is required, however, is a bigger combination of several countries—may be, to begin with, all those who belong to South and South East Asia would join the 'system' and then the others, who lie South of Suez and Panama, would pull in. Such a system, eschewing the use of nuclear weapons would be the first 'non-power' bloc in the world to come forward and declare a moratorium on all wars in its area. Free Bangla Desh and India could have made a beginning in this direction.

Even if Bangla Desh now takes a long time to enter the comity of nations, nothing prevents us from making a beginning. Two steps are necessary in this matter. The first is to defreeze our relations with all those whom we still keep at bay due to our diplomatic inhibitions, and open dialogues simultaneously with all of them such as Israel on the one hand and China on the other. The other is to try and forge a special bond of relationship with the non-nuclear powers in the area, India, along with a few others, who would then form the nucleus of the fifth

'system'. Careful diplomacy devoted to positive policies of peace and sacrifice as well as to the rational interpretation of the problems of the area to its people and an objective analysis of the possible losses and gains that might accrue to each nation when it calls for certain immediate sacrifices in order to provide sanctions to the system, could achieve the task.

A rapid programme of 'aid free' development in India and an immediate move for the establishment of the new zone of nuclear free nations are, therefore, our minimum demands. The conventional arguments against such a proposal are only too well known to bear repetition or rebuttal. It is impossible to secure any appreciable level of development, the critics would cry out. Or 'could we stop all aggressions till then?' And again 'it is impossible to bring any two nations together what to speak of building a bloc'. These criticisms, however emotional, imply of course that it is easier to make the 'Bomb' and find in it the Talisman for the generation. But what do we really achieve even if we make it, the Bomb, so late in the day and at such inhuman cost? General Chaudhury in one of his recent talks, has called this much vaunted 'bomb' only a 'sundry' weapon. Isn't it then only an unimaginative and short sighted leadership which would still heckle for it and find in it the saviour of a nation?

A country's defence cannot be an easy manoeuvre. Each nation has to pay the price required for it and travel the hard way for the purpose. That price, that hard way, is fraught with sacrifices. A great many sacrifices which will bring in rapid development of the weaker sections of the population at the cost of the elite and build a nuclear free 'zone' of sister nations at the cost of some of our 'national' interests, would certainly be the wage of peace. Even if the price seems too high at the moment, the venture is worth launching. For, in it and only in it lies the guarantee for the defence of our land.

# Afro-Asian ocean

K. P. MISRA

IT is important, in any discussion on India's future defence policy, to pay special attention to the Indian Ocean area, perhaps more appropriately called the Afro-Asian Ocean area. The area is over 6,500 miles in length (north to south) and nearly 6,000 miles in breadth (east to west), and the total extent of it is about 27 million square miles. The Ocean washes the shores of as many as forty countries inhabited by more than a thousand million people. It extends from South Africa to the countries of East Africa to South and South-East Asia, and goes all the way to Australia. It constitutes the main artery of communication between the West and the Far East.

When we use the word *area* in the context of the Indian Ocean, we do not do so in the sense in which the area studies specialists use it. The Indian Ocean and the countries around it can be said to form an area because they share

several common—or, at any rate, intertwined—political and security problems. These problems may vitally affect India in any future 'great or middle power confrontation', to quote the poser.

Emphasizing the strategic importance of this area, a military expert recently pointed out that the student of international relations might well develop in relation to this area a concept akin to Sir John H. Mackinder's 'Heartland' concept, and maintain that if any of the world's major powers should succeed in acquiring more influence in the countries around here than the others, it would command predominant political power in the world.

It is, therefore, not surprising that all major powers of the world have made this area one of their prime concerns. Their moves and countermoves, especially during the last seven or eight years, have made this area of relative peace

throughout history into a hotbed of political rivalry with distinct security orientations. The Report of the Ministry of External Affairs of the GOI for 1969-70 recognizes that the developments in the Indian Ocean area have assumed considerable importance.

**T**here are certain powers which seem to think that some sort of a vacuum has been created on account of the British decision in 1964 to withdraw partially from this region. There is a great deal of vague and inadequately informed thinking about the nature of the vacuum. Hence it is desirable to possess a clear idea of the situation.

Without going into detail we might point out that the whole theory of a power vacuum is a product of what is admittedly an imperialist way of thinking which assumes that the new nations of Asia and Africa are unable to take care of their security needs and that, therefore, they need some outside power to function as an international or regional *chaudhary*. Almost every major power is obsessed with this sort of thinking and is worried over the intentions and moves of other rival powers.

Thus, there is a vicious circle of action and counter-action, with the causes and consequences relentlessly chasing each other. The major powers are not willing whole-heartedly to accept the logic of the emergence of multiple polities as sovereign states. This poses a real threat to the security of this area. As the largest, and potentially the most powerful, country of this area, India cannot afford to ignore these developments except at the risk of its own defence and security.

Let the protagonists of the theory of a power vacuum understand that about 70,000 British troops, supported by an equally modest naval and air power, did not constitute much real military strength in the vast area around the Indian Ocean. The liquidation of imperial power from this area created a very wide gap between the military resources of Great Britain and the enormity of the emerging

problems. The British decided to withdraw because they realized in good time that it was beyond their power to play an effective military role in the area.

A few events of the last few years amply support this contention. British troops were no doubt able to quell violence a couple of times in Mauritius and achieve some other minor successes elsewhere. But, when it came to larger tasks, they could prevent neither the violence in Aden nor the conflict between India and Pakistan. If China and the Soviet Union desisted from doing certain things in this area, it was not on account of the British presence but because of certain other factors, such as the possibility of American intervention. Thus, it is difficult to see how in this new political setting the continuance or otherwise of the British presence in the area could be of much consequence.

**I**t is important to remember that post-war international policies, of which politics in this area is a part, have undergone fundamental changes. Today's world is a much more heavily populated and highly integrated world, a much more complex and power-oriented world. It is utterly unrealistic to think that some new version of *Pax Britannica* can give any guarantee of peace or security in the area. That the intense nationalism reigning in the countries of the area would never accept it has become abundantly clear during the last two decades.

In the emerging political landscape of the post-war era the United States undertook global responsibilities, and inevitably these related to this area as much as to others. About the middle of the 1950s it organized a series of defence and economic agreements at both levels—bilateral and multilateral—to contain communism, an effort in which it encountered failure.

It is reasonable to believe that as major partners in the western alliance system, the United States and Britain were in constant consultation about the situation in

the area. The United States was not very happy with the speed of the British withdrawal. It was keen on checkmating whatever moves that the Soviet Union and China might make with a view to increasing their influence in the area.

**I**n 1964, the United States and the United Kingdom jointly undertook a survey of the area, held several secret conferences and discussions, and concluded, in December 1966 an agreement under which Britain undertook to make available to the United States the islands of Diego Garcia and the remainder of the Chagos Archipelago, as well as the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches constituting the British Indian Ocean Territory for defence purposes. The idea was to let the United States use these bases to extend the protective reach of its air and naval power to this vital and sensitive area and to pave the way for a larger US role in the area. The agreement is for a period of fifty years.

Soon after the Conservatives came to power in Britain after the last general election there, President Nixon made renewed efforts to build up these Anglo-American bases. America is happy because the Conservatives have come to power and have decided to reverse partly the policy of the previous government to withdraw from east of Suez.

It is also significant that earlier, in 1963, the United States had concluded an agreement with Australia to ensure its co-operation in the effort to build collective defence and to preserve peace and security. Under the agreement, it secured the right to establish, maintain, and operate a naval communication system at North West Cape in the State of Western Australia. The agreement is valid for at least twenty-five years.

Thus, the United States has set up bases and is trying to equip them. The importance of bases still remains though bases in hostile surrounding have become unprofitable. The Anglo-American bases are to serve many purposes.

the military purpose being the most significant.

The SEATO approach to the Third World has already proved a failure. In fact, the United States is coming, and in a sense it has already come, to the end of a policy approach. In his recent report on the US foreign policy for the 1970s, President Nixon unambiguously declared: 'American cannot live in isolation if it expects to live in peace. We have no intention of withdrawing from the world.' He also made it clear that the central thesis of the Nixon Doctrine was that 'the United States will participate in the defense and development of allies and friends'.

It would be a mistake to think that the American objective of strengthening its influence in the area and of limiting the influence of the Soviet Union and China has undergone any basic transformation. It would seem that under the new approach the United States proposes to keep its military presence through the bases which it has acquired. It will use these bases for limited as well as wider purposes, according to the exigencies of each situation.

It is possible that the US will make a more effective use of these bases than of the 7th Fleet in the Western Pacific. It will, further, continue to give military assistance to certain countries in the area. The idea behind assisting both India and Pakistan is to accelerate the pace of armament in the sub-continent, so that each may cancel out the other in economic growth and power. Finally, it will use the lever of economic aid to influence political decisions.

India and other countries of the area are alive to the dangers inherent in these moves. That is why at the Lusaka Conference of non-aligned countries, at the last Commonwealth Conference, and at other meetings they have criticized the setting up of bases. Britain's decision to supply arms to South Africa has further aggravated the situation.

In view of the situation of co-operation and clash between the two super powers on the one

hand and between America and China on the other, America will continue to be interested in the area, although it may make a few modifications in its approach from time to time. Recent efforts to improve Sino-US relations, symbolised by President Nixon's proposed visit to Peking, is not likely to change this basic position in the near future.

The Soviet Union, the other super power, realizes the importance of the Indian Ocean area to its own interests. Like the United States, it has drawn lessons from the experience gained in recent years. It knows that communist movements in Asia have depended almost exclusively on internal forces and that, where successful, they have succeeded invariably because of the tide of nationalism. In other words, it knows that nationalism has proved to be a more formidable power than any other ideology and can exercise a more relentless pressure than any external pressure.

There is reason to think that the Soviet Union treats the Indian Ocean as its underbelly. Some of its important industrial and research complexes are located in its Central Asian Republics. It apprehends danger to its security from the south. Its interest in the Persian Gulf area and in South-East Asia are well-known.

In the post-war period, the Soviet Navy has developed very rapidly. Admiral Gorshkov did not exaggerate when he recently said in an interview that the Soviet Navy, consisting of surface ships, submarines, and aircraft-carriers, equipped with nuclear missiles, can successfully carry out various strategic tasks of an offensive nature in any area of the World Ocean.

To improve its position in the Indian Ocean area, the Soviet Union has considerably increased its naval activities during the last two years. For instance, it is well-known that an increasing number of Soviet warships have been passing through the Strait of Malacca into the Indian Ocean. Other

Soviet vessels make even longer journeys to the Indian Ocean from the Black Sea via the Mediterranean and the South Atlantic around the tip of South Africa. All this activity makes one thing clear: the Soviet Union is determined to expand its naval power not only through naval units but also through oceanography, fishing, and merchant marine.

It is estimated that the Soviet Navy's Indian Ocean Squadron consists of fourteen warships built around vessels carrying guided missiles. Its area of operation is off the coast of India in the Arabian Sea. Most of the warships and supply vessels are based on Vladivostok. If and when the Suez Canal opens, they will get their supplies from naval bases in the Black Sea. There is speculation that the Soviet Union is keen on setting up bases of its own and is looking around for sites in many countries—India, Singapore, Mauritius, etc.

During the last five years the Soviet Union has displayed its keenness more than once to ensure for itself a say in the area. Consider, for example, the proposal, made by L. Brezhnev at the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969, to set up a collective security system in Asia. The proposal understandably startled some people as it clearly amounted to a reversal of the earlier Soviet policy.

The motivations and details of the proposal were not explained. It is quite possible that these were deliberately kept vague with a view to studying the reaction of others. The facts revealed after the Indo-Soviet Treaty, signed in August 1971, indicate that through quiet diplomacy, the Soviet Union is trying to give concrete shape to the Brezhnev proposal. The Treaty, in all probability, will facilitate the establishing of greater influence for the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean area.

At present the Soviet Union is concentrating on economic and arms aid to the three main regions

in the arc around the Indian Ocean—Iran in the west, India and Pakistan in the centre, and Malaysia and Singapore in the east. One of its major objectives is to counteract Chinese influence in the area. In the process, it has demonstrated that ideology counts for little in its foreign-policy calculations.

Briefly, the Soviet Union is expanding its navy, trying to acquire bases in the Indian Ocean area, entering into security pacts with the countries in the area and giving economic and arms assistance to a number of countries to the extent of some one billion U.S. dollars annually, all with a view to containing China and, to a lesser extent, the United States. One may well see here the future strategy of the Soviet Union. The rising tempo of Soviet naval operations is a matter of deep concern to the West.

China is a disturbing factor in the area. The primary purpose of China in taking its differences with India to the level of an armed conflict was to undermine the latter's prestige and economic development and to destroy its chances of challenging it on the Asian mainland. China's conflict with the Soviet Union has further heightened tension in the area. There is reason to believe that the Indian Ocean is a major issue of contention between the two communist giants in view of its long-term strategic significance.

China has no outlet on the Indian Ocean. It is keen on having either access by land to the Indian Ocean or the use of port facilities. Any assessment of Chinese intentions in the area has perforce to be speculative, but it is indisputable that it has potentialities to upset the *status quo*.

To the recent Russian proposal of a collective security system in Asia, a Chinese newspaper reacted rather sharply. It described the proposal as nothing more than an anti-Chinese military alliance and 'an effort to rig up a ring of encirclement around China'.

At the moment China is not a great naval power, but its capacity to influence the course of events in the Indian Ocean area should not be underestimated.

Japan and Australia are also capable of playing a role in the area. Japan does not seem to be interested in Asia as a whole. Its area of concentration is Pacific Asia. On the other hand, Australia, particularly because it feels threatened by the rising power of China, is keen on playing a role. But the orientation of its approach is incompatible with the essentially non-aligned approach of most countries in the area. If Japan and Australia, along with India, could forge a common outlook, it would be a formidable combination. Such a situation, however, is not likely to develop in the near future.

For India the area is of immense significance though its interests mainly lie in the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea, and the sea-belt extending to the Equator. Its concerns should be:

1. that its security is not endangered from the south;
2. that the sea and air routes of the sea are not disturbed; and
3. that the activities of the major Powers do not make the area an area of tension and conflict.

The establishment of bases on the shores of Australia and on British territories in the Indian Ocean, the movement of Soviet vessels in the Indian Ocean area, and the hostility of China may present a threat to India's interests. Hence it can afford to remain indifferent only at its own risk. So far it has insisted (1) that any system of military alliance is undesirable; (2) that the idea of filling in a power vacuum in the traditional sense should be given up; (3) that some way should be found to check the rivalry between the major powers in the area; (4) that the real security of the area is dependent upon the stability and economic develop-

ment of the political systems of the area; and (5) that this should be accomplished through co-operative efforts.

This policy was good enough, but now a shadow has been cast over some of its aspects by the recently concluded Indo-Soviet Treaty. The fate of international treaties has by no means been uniform. Hence it is the future alone which would unfold the precise implications of the Treaty.

The Treaty, though called a treaty for peace, friendship and co-operation, is essentially a security pact. Articles 1 to 7 contain platform platitudes and the real provisions are contained in Articles 8, 9 and 10. Without going into a detailed analysis of the latter set of Articles, we may state that it is a distinctly new dimension in our foreign policy, the Government of India's statements notwithstanding. It is a major modification in our policy of non-alignment, a philosophy from which many of the above principles of India's foreign policy drew nourishment.

In the emerging international system the three powers—America, Russia and China—are trying to outmanoeuvre each other. What America is really attempting is to improve its relations with China and at the same time seek accommodation with the Soviet Union on some of the crucial issues facing the two Super Powers. In this triangular contest India could maximise its gains, perhaps more than what it was able to do in a bipolar international system. But instead of doing so it has gone closer to one of them.

The Treaty may make our task of normalising relations with China more difficult, it may weaken the pro-Indian elements in America, it may provoke China and America to render greater assistance to Pakistan, it may frighten some countries of the area to go into the orbit of either America or China, and above all, it may heighten the existing tension and rivalry in the Indian Ocean area. India's word that the coun-

tries of the area should consolidate their independence politically, economically and militarily, without alliances, is not likely to be accepted at its face value. Thus on account of the Treaty India has perhaps created a credibility gap. The tasks of security in this area have perhaps been rendered more difficult by the Treaty.

**W**hatever the implication of the Treaty, we venture to suggest that India should seek wider acceptance of certain new measures.

It has been suggested in certain quarters that there should be an international convention to pledge respect for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the States in the area. The idea is that instead of forging an anti-Chinese front, we should seek to promote a convention not directed against any country in particular. Participants in the convention should include all States in the area, as well as Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, the Soviet Union, and the United States. It is possible that China may not co-operate in this effort, but the proposal seems to be worth pursuing.

There is reason to think that the Anglo-American bases are not just observation posts to keep a watch on Soviet naval activity; they are part of a long range nuclear missiles system. This poses a serious threat to the security of the area. India should, therefore, vigorously work for denuclearization and pacification of the Indian Ocean, an idea which Ceylon has put forward.

Also, India should work for a multiple political order in the Indian Ocean area, so that it may effectively cooperate with other countries in the area whose problems are as enormous as its own. It should think in terms of making the resources of the area available to the surrounding countries on a balanced and equalitarian basis. Its task during the coming decade is not, and should not be, to attempt to replace any power or to monopolize the use of resources but to help create con-

ditions in which different countries in the area are able to stand on their own feet as self-respecting Asian-Africans.

India is one of the countries endowed with the potentiality to influence the course of events in the area. Let us hope that it would employ its ability in a manner worthy of this historic task, so that the major powers are not able to fish in the troubled waters of the Indian Ocean area.

The political systems in the countries of the area are passing through a difficult and complex modernizing process. They are weak and are beset with many chronic problems. Strong, aggressive States are always tempted to move into such weak, divided, and poorly defended areas unless they are forestalled by other forces. Without exhibiting the Big Brother attitude, India should vigorously try to promote regional economic cooperation which is a sure foundation of security.

**J**awaharlal Nehru used to remind the nation repeatedly that far more than the army, the navy, and the air force, defence meant industry and production, which are the chief components of economic development. India has to strengthen its own power, which in turn would enable it to prevent encroachments detrimental to its interests.

It is desirable to have an integrated and comprehensive framework in analysing the developing situation in the area, which is multidirectional. Firstly, it is not enough to take into account the ability of the major powers to influence inter-State conflicts; intra-State conflicts may, in some cases, pose greater threats to security. What is happening in Bangla Desh should make this point clear. Secondly, as we have indicated above, security should not be perceived in narrow military terms. Political and economic problems are equally, if not more, important in our context. In evolving a realistic and effective defence policy, therefore, in the years to come, we should take all these aspects into account.

# Role of foreign policy

SISIR GUPTA

IT is obvious that the task of promoting the security of a nation is not of its armed forces alone; among those who contribute to India's security are the farmers who grow enough food to meet our requirements, the workers who keep the wheels of industry moving, the administrators who maintain order in our society and the political leaders who make stable progress possible through the articulation of the demands of India's teeming millions. But even if one were to discard such a broad definition, the role of foreign policy in ensuring security is clearly relevant for any discus-

sion of India's defences. For, the defence and foreign policies of any nation are directly co-related: the adequacy of a country's military strength enables it to pursue other objectives of foreign policy just as foreign policy is expected to supplement defence efforts and make good any glaring inadequacy in defence preparedness. The orchestration of a nation's defence and foreign policies is, therefore, a matter of vital importance.

In what ways is foreign policy expected to promote the security of a nation? For countries which possess the necessary resources but do not yet have a self-reliant

defence-production base, foreign policy ought to create conditions in which such self-reliance can be achieved. The attainment of self-sufficiency in defence production is for most nations a problem of borrowing technology and any problem of borrowing from others is a problem of foreign policy.

**W**hile this is obvious enough, there is a less obvious function of foreign policy in paving the way for a country's march towards self-reliance in defence production. Such self-reliance is by definition unwelcome to the rest of the world; for, a nation which is self-reliant in defence is also a nation which has emerged as an autonomous centre of power in the international society.

(A Great Power is one that can look after its own security.)

Any acquisition of nuclear weapons, in particular, is almost a punishable offence in the eyes of both those who already have and those who will never have a nuclear armoury. It is the task of foreign policy to create such a pattern of foreign relations that concerted international attempts to prevent a country's march towards self-sufficiency do not become possible.

It is worth while to mention here that it is in this area that China's foreign policy has been so adroitly conducted in the decade that started in 1956. Peking's relations with Moscow were good enough in the early years of this decade to enable China to borrow nuclear technology from the Soviet Union. It gradually escalated its conflict with Russia to deny to Moscow the leverage needed to guide or control China's efforts to emerge as a Great Power.

The conflict was initially conducted in ideological terms so that hopes could still be entertained in Moscow of an eventual rapprochement on mutually beneficial terms. In fact, the most significant Russian concessions to China were made after the 20th Party Congress. The 'loss of China' would in any case be a major set-back

for the Soviet Union and a school of thought was bound to flourish in Soviet society which would regard it a function of Soviet foreign policy to set matters right with Peking.

Before the final crunch came and Peking decided to convert the inter-party quarrel into an inter-government conflict, it had taken various measures carefully to convey to its adversaries in the West the message that by destroying the Sino-Soviet alliance it was rendering a vital service to the western powers. The cost of tolerating China as a new Great Power was less than the benefits it offered to the United States. The great drama of the Sino-Soviet conflict was hiding behind it the fact that China was then taking the final steps towards its emergence as a Great Power.

Few countries in the world have all the advantages that Peking had in conducting this game: nor are there many nations which can be so deftly Machiavellian. Certainly, India is a different kettle of fish.

**I**t would in any case be wrong to equate the problems of China of the late fifties and those of India of today. For one thing, India has greater problems of security. The threat to China's security then was from only one source—the United States, which as a Super Power was already deterred by the Soviet Union; the Taiwanese threat to invade the mainland was a non-starter.

In India's case, the threats are different. Pakistan is a medium sized conventional power which can use force against India without the risk of starting a world conflagration and perhaps without even creating serious consternation in other parts of the world. The problem of China's security vis-a-vis the U.S.A. was a problem of peace and stability for the world as a whole; the problem of India's security vis-a-vis Pakistan is only a problem for a region which in any event is of marginal significance for global peace.

Hence, India could well be involved in a series of small wars

whereas China would either have a major war or none at all. China did not have the misfortune of having a Pakistan pitted against her. India which might have played that role opted out of it in the early fifties. It is often forgotten that few other political powers of the world have had to cope with a maddening problem like Pakistan.

**T**he threat to India from China is in some ways comparable to the threat to China from the United States. To the extent that China is a Great Power, it could not possibly get away with a major offensive action against India without creating a situation which is of relevance for other world powers. The deterrent effect of Soviet (and until recently, American) power would always be a factor in any Sino-Indian military confrontation.

Yet the differences between the two cases should also be taken note of. The very fact that China has been and probably is a lesser breed of power provides it with certain opportunities in relation to India.

The central conflict in the world has been the one between the two Super Powers and however large might have been the area of their agreement, it could never be extended to include in its scope the conception and implementation of joint Soviet-American measures for the security of other countries. The Sino-Indian conflict, therefore, remains one of those secondary conflicts in the world which need not automatically set the existing Great Power mechanism at work. The reported conversation between Kissinger and Ambassador Jha is an indication of this reality.

In this sense, the problems of India's security have always been greater than China's and India could not have pursued a policy of accumulation of power without being prepared to use such power frequently in situations along her borders. This, indeed, is the point that is often missed in discussions of India's defence problems. It is



the very weakness of India which is forcing it to be involved in conflicts during this transitional phase of its progress as a power.

If the country did not convey the impression of being transparently weak, it could have achieved its major foreign policy objectives without being called upon to use force. A stronger India might have forced the Portuguese out of Goa without moving into it, just as it would have prevented Pakistan from attacking this country in 1965 and China from doing so earlier.

**B**e that as it may, the relevant fact is that the weakness of India has made it inevitable that she should be prepared to fight certain types of wars in order to sustain her security and integrity while pursuing her larger goals of creating a more stable pattern of secure national existence.

There was the controversy in China at one time regarding the desirability of skipping over the phase of building up conventional forces and launching a nuclear programme before the Chinese army was modernized. It is now well known that the present Chinese leaders over-ruled people like Peng Teh-huai who advocated greater emphasis on conventional weapons. This has not cost China anything for the simple reason that it did not have to fight conventional wars.

For India, the road to power has to be a longer and a much more arduous one, simply because with its present pattern of external relations it cannot possibly escape the phase of building up its conventional power.

Thus, what foreign policy is immediately expected to contribute to India's security is not so much in terms of paving the conditions for an eventual Indian entry into the Great Power club as in terms of making it possible for India to modernize her armed forces with the help of advanced weapons from abroad.

It is necessary for us to acknowledge that the strength of the

armed forces of India was not a major concern of foreign policy makers in the early years. This is not to repeat the absurd suggestion that Jawaharlal Nehru had no attitude to security at all. In fact, he had contributed to India's security in a different and, perhaps, surer manner by building up a relationship with neighbouring countries, particularly China, which assured peace in the region. Having done so, Nehru had come to believe that ultimately the best method of promoting India's defences was to build up India's technology and industrial might so that this vast country could eventually emerge as a major power.

The Nehru model of security had no problems of internal consistency and in fact it had worked fairly well for several years. When it failed, it did so because the crucial issues regarding the relative power and status of the nations of this area had begun to get determined earlier than he thought was possible. It is the Chinese who violated the terms of the Sino-Indian understanding of 1954 and deprived India of her sense of security in order to force the issues before India was ready to face them.

**E**ver since 1962, defence and security has in fact become the major concern of India's foreign policy makers, though a great deal of reluctance to admit this fact still pervades our foreign policy discussions. The problems of procurement of weapons in particular began to loom large in Indian foreign policy calculations in the post-'62 years. A good deal of success has since been registered in the modernization of the Indian army. Once again, however, India failed to ensure that while its armed strength would increase, the war-making capacity of her adversaries would be restricted to existing levels.

The years of modernization of India's armed forces have also been the years of a great leap forward in Chinese military capacity. Neither the signing of the Test

Ban Treaty nor the mechanism of Soviet-American accord could prevent the emergence of China as a nuclear power. Similarly, Pakistan succeeded in borrowing arms and equipment from various sources in order to maintain the kind of balance of armed strength in the sub-continent which would permit it to keep open the option of use of force against India.

No doubt, the 1965 war made a great difference to Pakistan's capacity and inclination to launch a war against India. But the reality that the increase of India's power in absolute terms did not also mean an improvement in its relative position vis-a-vis its adversaries is too glaring to be ignored.

**I**t is in this context that the Indo-Soviet Treaty has to be assessed. Apart from the many other implications of this important step taken by the foreign policy makers of India, it also marks the recognition of the fact that the post-'62 model of procuring arms and equipment from friendly sources while avoiding any overt military relationship with any power has proved to be inadequate for India's needs. The Indo-Soviet Treaty may appear unorthodox to those who had grown accustomed to the unique Indian orthodoxy in foreign policy that developed in the first quarter century of India's independence.

The fact of the matter, however, is that pressed by circumstances, India has now fallen back on what are universally regarded as orthodox methods of safeguarding and promoting a country's security. It is in this sense that India has now joined the power game and other nations dealing with us will have to take note of the fact that New Delhi's behaviour in world affairs will hereafter be less unorthodox, less erratic and more in accordance with the copy books of power politics.

The advantages of such a change in India's foreign policy are not quite apparent to many. It would be surprising if Peking, for example, can sustain its old

attitudes to India in the face of this major change in the style and content of India's foreign policy.

India's friends and adversaries alike had come to the conclusion that so strong was the pull of the unique Indian orthodoxy of non-alignment and so evenly balanced were the domestic forces determining foreign policy that this country was bound to suffer from indecision and inability to move in any direction. There was nothing that India could have done within the older framework to adversely affect the position of other nations and, to that extent, it had no capacity whatsoever to bargain with its adversaries for arriving at reasonable schemes of co-existence.

It is not possible to discuss all the implications of the Indo-Soviet Treaty in a brief article but a few other remarks are necessary. The older model of Indian foreign policy did not prevent Great Powers from helping Pakistan. Therefore, the argument that there will now be a greater emphasis on Pakistan in the foreign policies of China and America is somewhat off the mark. After all, what more could these nations do to help Pakistan? And what is left in Pakistan to be helped? The probability, therefore, is that the question of how to deal with New Delhi will hereafter receive greater attention in world capitals. And that itself is a significant advantage.

Secondly, in the emerging power pattern, the Indo-Soviet *entente* would continue to represent a major feature of international life. This cannot but be advantageous for both India and the Soviet Union for the simple reason that both have geo-political compulsions to maintain friendly and co-operative relations with each other. It is an axiom of international politics that friendship between nations can make good the deficiencies that they individually have as powers.

It is of course true that the Soviet Union, as a Super Power, has no such apparent deficiency. Yet, in the absence of close relations with India, any Soviet effort to

play a major role in South-East Asia and the Indian Ocean will be unsustainable. In India's case, the deficiencies are more apparent.

It is correct to point out that the Indo-Soviet Treaty by itself does not add to India's own power in such situations as India may have to tackle individually. But it does enhance India's capacity to face those situations in which Indian and Soviet interests converge. The real difference between those who support and those who suspect the Indo-Soviet Treaty is in regard to the extent of such convergence.

It is the present writer's view that in the context of Southern Asia in particular and Asia in general, there is a large area of common Indo-Soviet interests and that sheer geo-political realities would sustain the largeness of their area of agreement. If considerations of defence and security began to become salient in India's foreign policy since 1962, the conclusion of a treaty with the Soviet Union in 1971 should free this country from its debilitating obsession with problems of security.

Yet, foreign policy will have to continue to promote India's security. As has been suggested earlier, one of the ways in which a nation's foreign policy safeguards its security is to create good and friendly relations with neighbouring powers. This is what Nehru had tried to do and this is what had become impossible to achieve without a perceptible improvement of India's defences.

Now that certain steps have been taken to rectify this situation, the problem of India's relations with neighbours should be accorded high priority by India's foreign policy makers. Care must, however, be taken to ensure that the pursuit of this objective does not lead to any dilution of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, which would in any case be the base on which the super-structure of stable peace in South Asia will have to be built.

A more significant task of foreign policy in the coming years

would be to ensure that the Indo-Soviet Treaty does not become a substitute for India's self-reliance in defence efforts. For the treaty to be successful, it is absolutely essential that India does not become either militarily or otherwise a burden on the Soviet Union. No nation would be prepared to carry a heavy burden like India and the utility of India's friendship would become less and less from the Soviet point of view if our incapacity to achieve self-reliance in defence were to become apparent to Moscow.

Much has been said in India about the unequal nature of the Indo-Soviet Treaty. (The term 'unequal treaty' has been used by some without any respect for its accepted meaning.) It is true that as powers, India and the Soviet Union are unequal and will remain so. But to both India and the Soviet Union, the relevance of the treaty over the coming years will be determined by how soon and how successfully the gap is narrowed.

Neither does the Soviet Union require a satellite in Asia nor does India have any intention of being one. A relationship of mutual benefit between India and the Soviet Union will have to be sustained through a massive Indian effort to improve not only its own economic base but also its defence potential.

Therefore, the Indo-Soviet Treaty should be viewed in India as one of the building blocks rather than as a structure itself. The value of the treaty would in the long term be judged by Indian opinion in terms of what it contributes to the assertion of India's legitimate rights and interests in the world. To the extent that the accumulation of a self-reliant defence capability is a vital step towards the achievement of this goal, the Indo-Soviet treaty has to be followed up by a number of measures to take the first steps towards that goal. Otherwise, it might prove to be one more of the futile experiments of New Delhi in avoiding the orthodox road to power.

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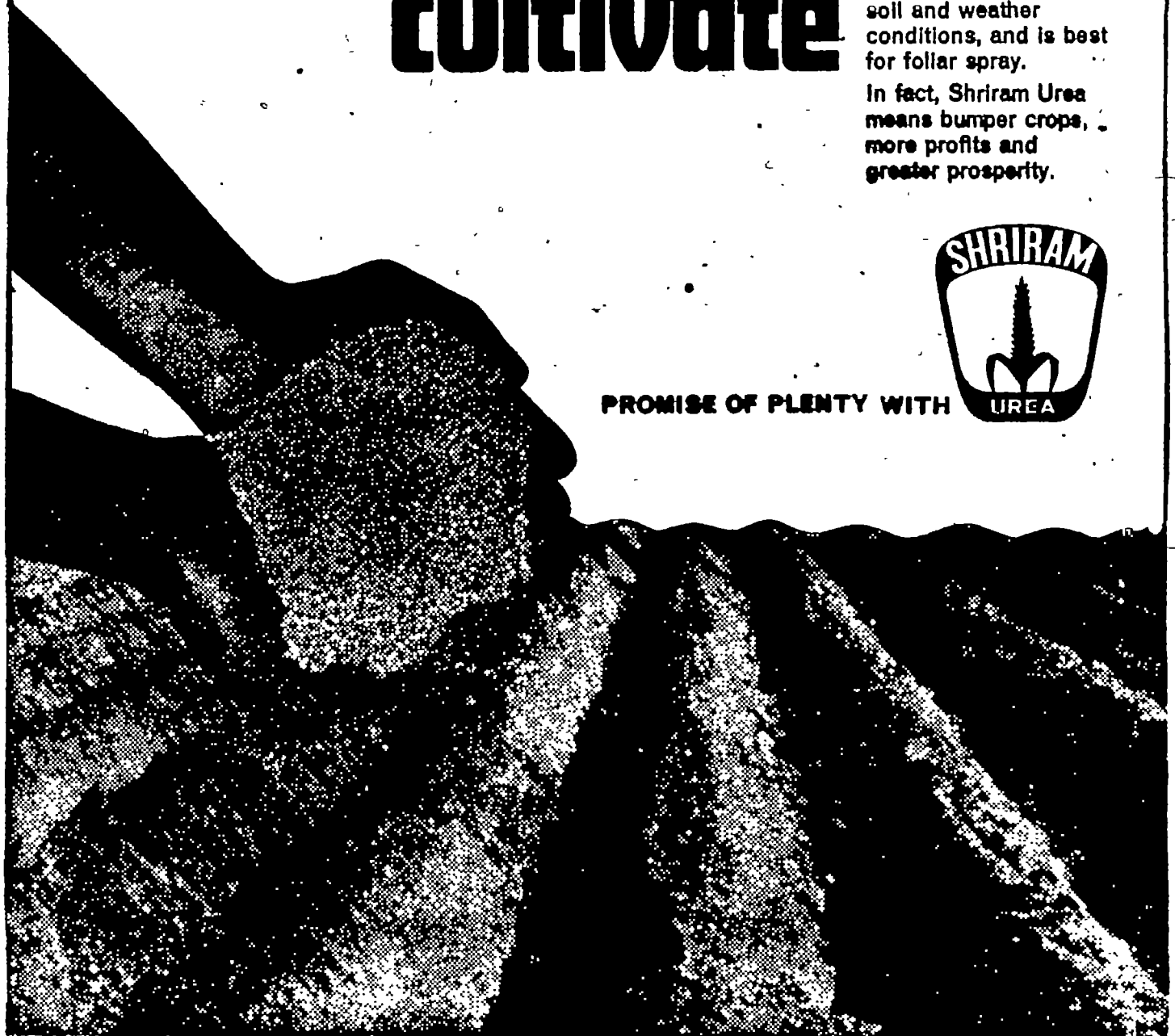
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# Communication

I WAS extremely disconcerted on going through several articles published in your 'China Today' (Nov. 1971) issue. I however intend to confine my criticism to the first two articles, namely, 'New Style' by Mira Sinha and 'Ideology and Utopia' by Manoranjan Mohanty.

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There was a lump in my throat after reading the unqualified assertion of Mrs. Sinha that as social scientists 'we should attempt to interpret China according

to its own formulations and its own framework'. The author is obviously trying to make social science stand upside down. How about interpreting Hitler in the light of *Mein Kampf*.

The obligation of the social scientist is to interpret facts and then draw his own conclusions. Thus, his (or her) basic fidelity is to truth. Logically, Indian scholars studying China are obligated to take into consideration facts and opinions available

from all sources for their own interpretation. Surely, total dependence on the Chinese media as the source of information and accepting them as the Bible is not becoming of any social scientist.

Thus, the whole basis of Mrs. Sinha's argument is fallacious because she seems to accept the official line of the moment on Chinese foreign policy as gospel truth and, furthermore, has no hesitation in taking the onus of defending the past, present and future of Chinese foreign policy hook, line and sinker.

Scepticism is a virtue that ought to be practiced by any student of social science in abundant measure. The latest drop-scene in the Chinese drama of foreign policy is yet unfolding. While the battle between ideology and national interest as the dominant factor in Chinese foreign policy is still raging, the question may be asked pertinently: why jump in when the worldly-wise hesitate to enter the fray? The Chinese line on Bangla Desh, the 'Che-Guevarists' of Ceylon, the developments in the Sudan, and, last, but not least, developing contacts with the United States do not give much hope for the future.

My sympathy for Mrs. Sinha in her self-created dilemma is abounding because the events seem to have overtaken her before the ink has dried on her own piece. Her assertion that the Chinese would insist on a Vietnam agreement preceding a 'Sino-U.S. meeting' is off the mark. Nixon has no intention of travelling to Peking via Hanoi. Again, she has referred to the polemics of the 1960s between the U.S.S.R. and China on revisionism. This is a charge that was bandied about by the Chinese a great deal because of the dealings of Khrushchov with U.S. leaders. One only hopes that Chou En-lai does not walk in the footsteps of the departed Russian leader during the 1970s. Eventually, Chou En-lai and not Liu Shao-Chi may turn out to be the Chinese Khrushchov.

Mohanty is even on less sure ground as compared to Mira Sinha. He has taken up cudgels on behalf of Maoism by employing the American jargon so much favoured by contemporary sociologists. The marriage of Marxism with the Americans has not proved fruitful. It is not comfortable for anybody to talk in two languages simultaneously. Moreover, Mohanty has tried to force too many facts in a capsule form. His performance can be compared to a drama with unfolding scenes cheaper by the dozen, but with hardly any connecting plot. This makes Mohanty a slippery customer

because he does not develop the main theme at any great length. All events seem to have equal weightage for him.

He has not attempted any critical assessment of the cultural revolution. For instance, what role has devolved on the Chinese army in the present situation has not been considered a fit subject for enlightenment by him? Indeed, hardly any one of the questions raised in the statement of the problem by the editors of the SEMINAR has been considered. The issues raised are however very pertinent to the debate. Mohanty has skirted nearly all of them by remaining on the periphery. Much more serious is the fact that the most crucial question of whether the recent ideological debate in China could be the manifestation of a struggle for power is dismissed outright.

Mohanty is indeed in such a great hurry that he has pontifically dismissed the varying interpretations of the cultural revolution as of no consequence. He has subjected poor Karl Mannheim to an unceremonious crucifixion. Mao and Mannheim are no proper bed partners and hence there was no need to juxtapose them. The eminent sociologist had defined ideology and utopia in a different context. The scuttling operation by Mohanty is thus wasted. Similarly, his table of three ideal types juxtaposing Weber, Gandhi and Mao Tse-tung is a good exercise for the titillation of fresher undergraduates, but it is wasted on a typical reader of the SEMINAR who happens to come from a higher age group.

Many of us with great admiration for Marxism (and some honest-to-God acquaintance with the social sciences) have been troubled by its numerous interpretations. How come that Mao is more right than Liu Shao-Chi? What would have happened if the roles were reversed? The suspicion that 'true' Marxism finds its fulfilment only in the established order seems to be confirmed.

It will be a great tragedy for the sinologists of this country to be swept off their feet by the father-figure of the great Chinese leader. A tremendous amount of flexibility will be required on their part to justify 'Hundred Flowers' today, 'the cultural revolution' tomorrow and the Chinese version of the 'revolution within one country' the very next day. It is thus necessary for the integrity of social science and the peace of their own souls, that our sinologists employ scepticism in a larger measure.

Girja Kumar  
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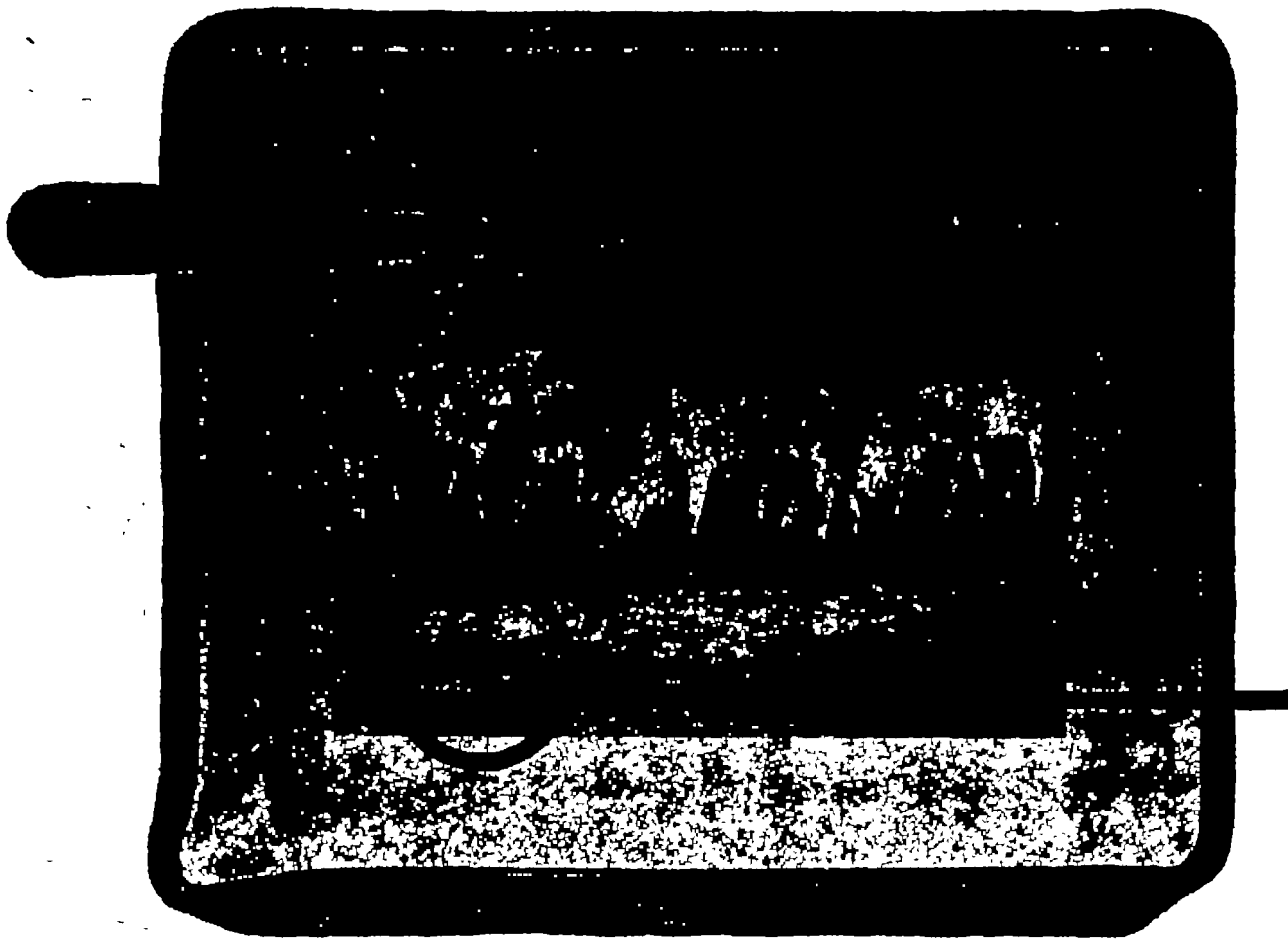
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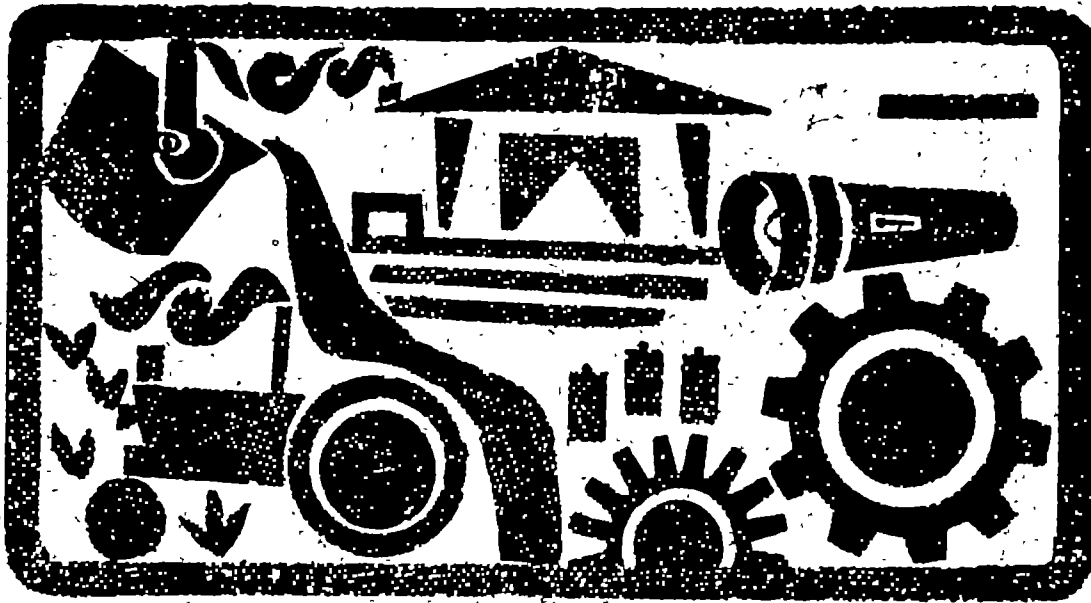
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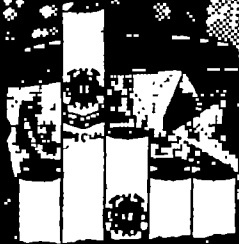
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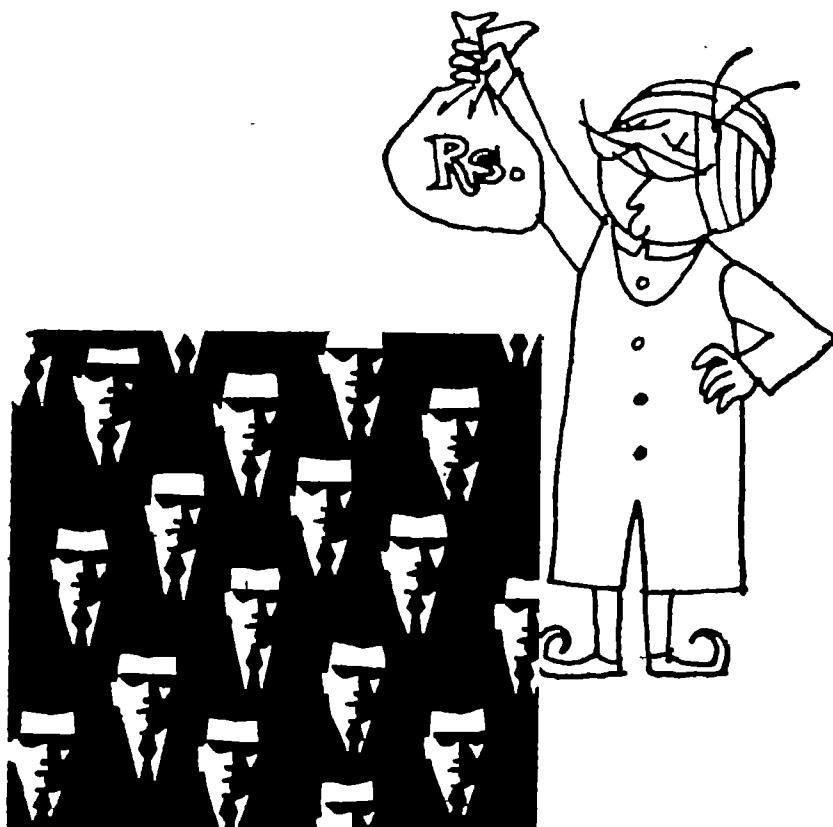
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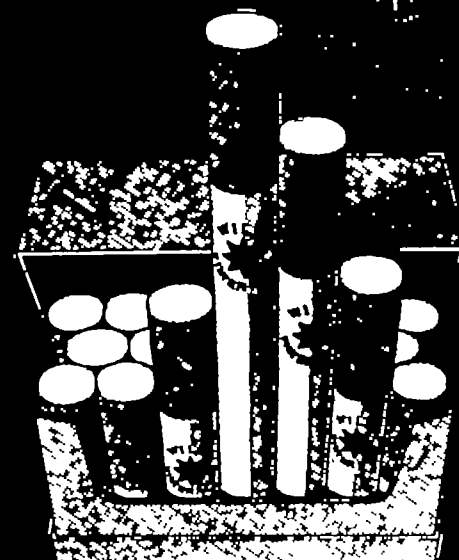
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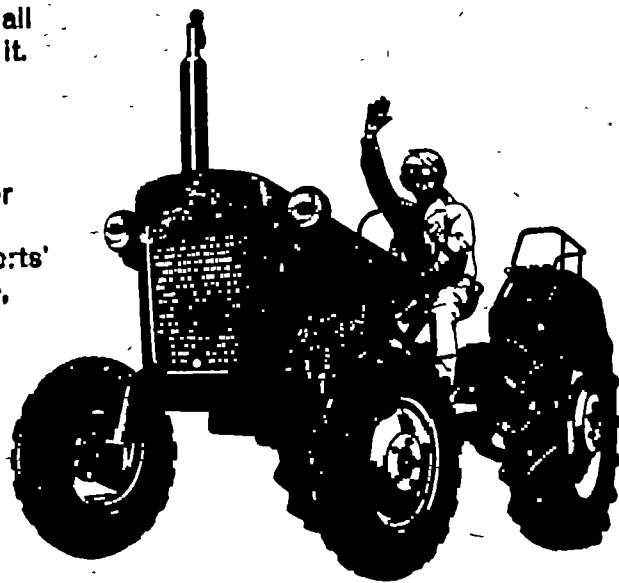
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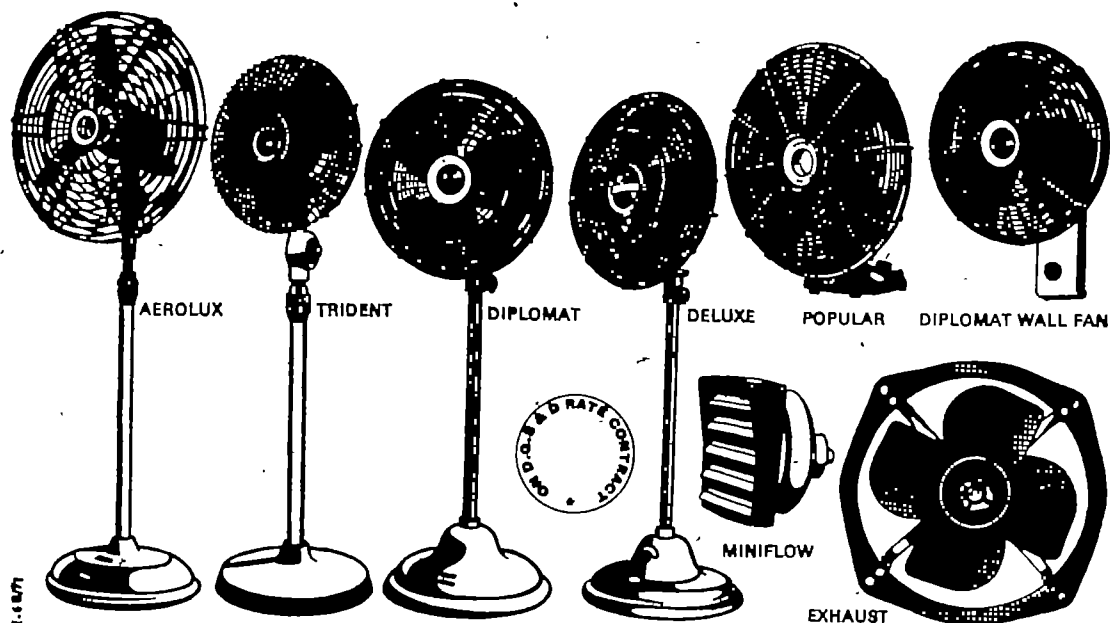
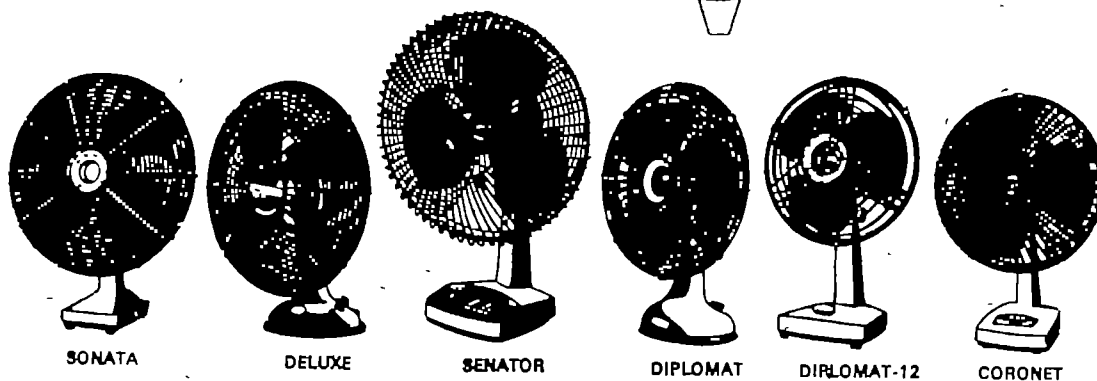
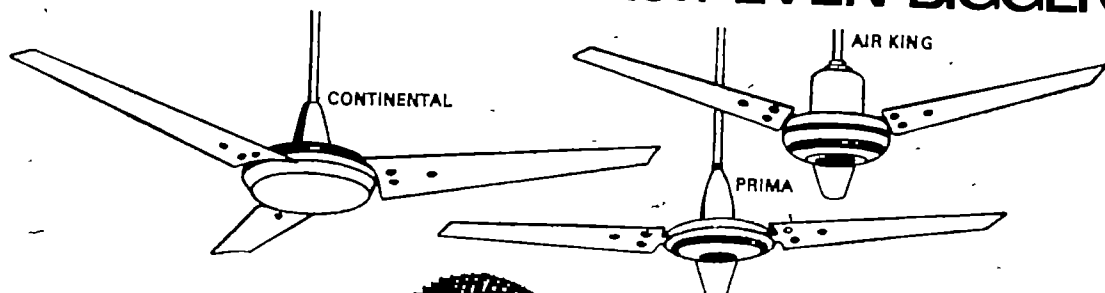


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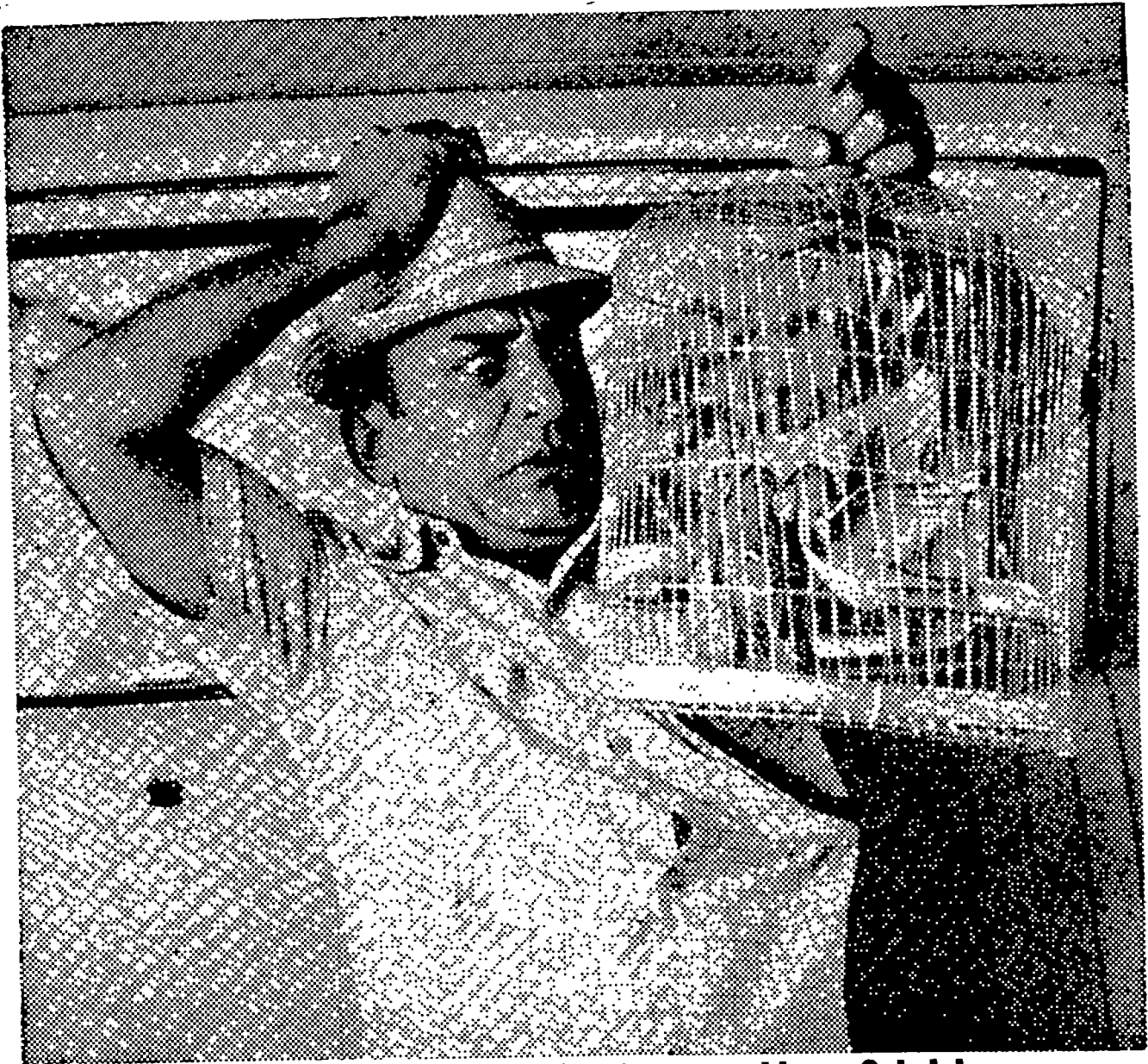
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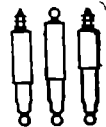


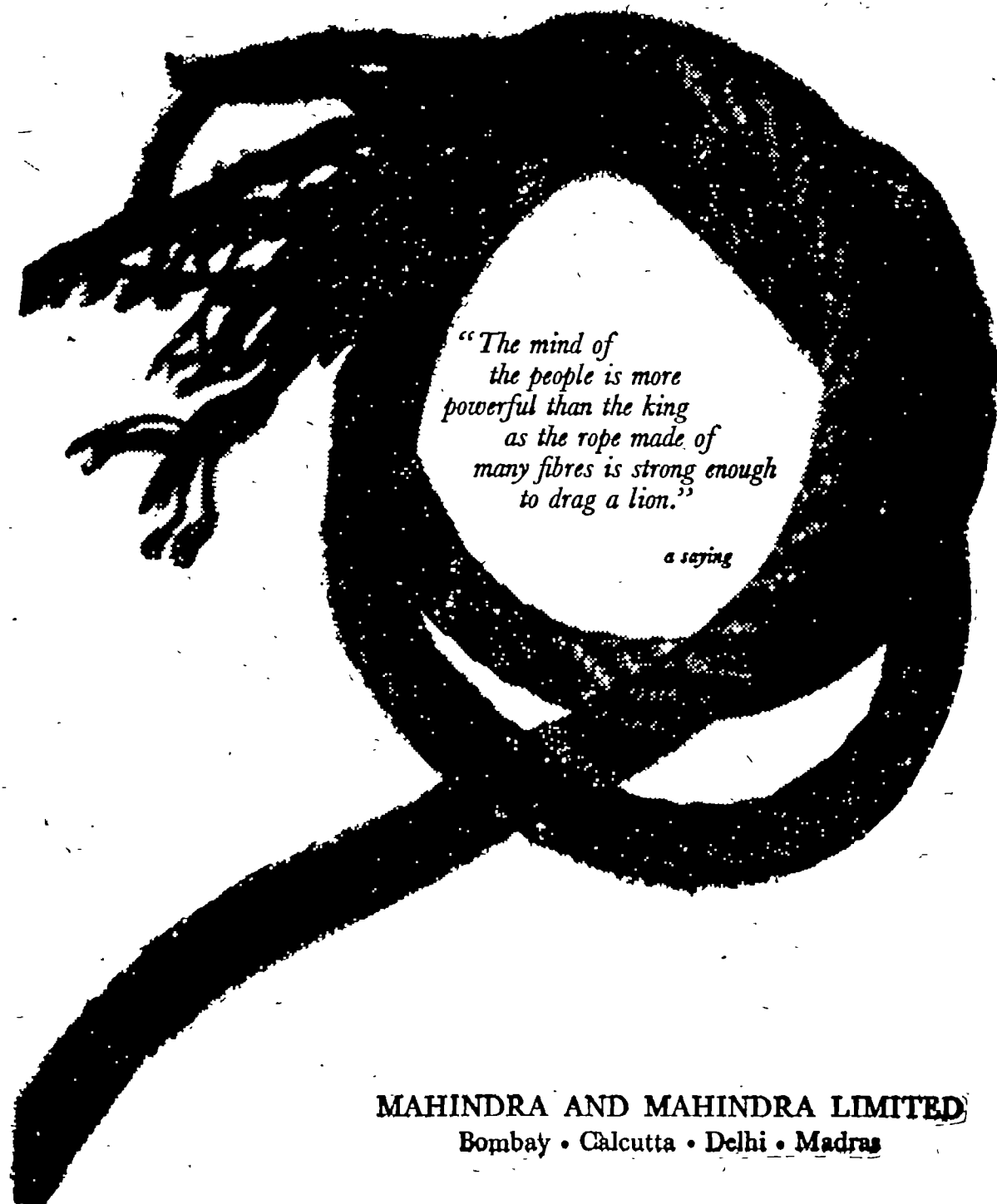




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# 147

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# The problem

WE must be clear in our minds what we mean by the expression, 'a free press'. In communist countries, the question of a free press does not arise. Shorn of Marxian dialectics, whose validity in this particular instance has long been open to challenge, the press situation is what may truly be described as monopolistic. The few newspapers that are allowed, supplement rather than compete with each other. They are all owned and managed by the government, or by other agencies entrenched in the power apparatus of the State. They perform a totally different function from that set by norms now universally accepted for a free press.

Like its counterpart in the West, the communist press does, of course, inform and educate the public. In fact, it goes much further. It mobilises public opinion in favour of the government's policies which, by definition, are 'pro-people'. But, unlike the western press, it is not meant to, nor indeed does it, function as 'the fourth estate of the realm'. It does not act as the public watchdog, even though it may sometimes, as in the USSR, serve as a channel for the expression of public grievances against the bureaucracy. In a communist society, the press is not seen as the vital counterpoint to the other foci of State power. The communist press differs essentially from the free press in that it does not represent the natural conflict or opposition of interests that exists in any society between a government and the people—

between the ruling caucus in power and the citizen on whose behalf power is exercised.

But, even under a liberal democratic constitution, in a free and open society, the press is not always free. The constitution may prescribe cast-iron guarantees for the freedom of expression but these guarantees are enabling provisions to facilitate the development of a free press. They do not ensure that a free press will, in fact, come into existence. Freedom of expression is an attribute of an open society, a necessary incident of its democratic constitution; it cannot by itself assure press freedom. The press in such countries, it is true, is not tied to the government, but it may still be tied to interests which inhibit it from discharging its responsibility to the public.

These rather basic points seem often to be overlooked in discussions about the free press. This is nowhere more true than in underdeveloped countries like India. A recent issue of *Quest*, for example, reproduced papers read at a seminar on press freedom held at Srinagar earlier this year. Most contributors seemed too readily to assume that a free press is a natural concomitant of an open society when, clearly, there is no necessary connection between the two.

The reason for this simple fallacy lies deeply embedded in the press' long and chequered his-

tory. The fact that a citizen is at liberty in a democracy to start an opposition press was felt sufficient to ensure that the situation would in due course give rise to a healthy competition between several such press owners. From this as a first premise, it was but a short step to the frequently unstated assumption that, with the operation of market forces, the press lords would, in course of time, come to represent interests that were substantially opposed to each other's. Nobody paused in those property-dominated days to ask whether this 'substantial' opposition would really be substantial in the sense of being between two social classes, or only marginal as between two groups within the same class. Instead, it was somewhat hastily concluded that such a 'natural' clash would assure a fair and balanced representation for all important points of view in conflict in society.

That, in reconstructed form, was the classical theory of press freedom. The theory has, of course, long since been exploded, nowhere more effectively than in the U.S. Even at its peak, it operated with a heavy natural bias in favour of property and commercial interests. The reasons were obvious. Only the moneyed classes could afford to own and run newspapers. With the growing trend towards industrialisation and urbanisation, it has never been truer than today that none but the most powerful financial interests can afford to invest in daily newspapers. This has led to a peculiarly vicious

circle. The bigger the newspaper, the more its resources: the more its resources, the bigger its appeal for the large number of today's urbanised readers, who naturally want the most complete and professional news services their money can buy—something that only the big dailies can provide.

There may have been some distant time in the past when a man of modest resources, fired with an intense desire to inform and educate the public, could venture to set himself up as editor-proprietor of a small, local or community daily. His paper flourished, if it did, to the extent that it reflected public opinion or served the needs of the community. But, as the perspective gained from the free press' history has since shown, this was an ideal that often fell far short of realisation. Today, no one with a concern for truth can deny that only the 'haves' of the world enjoy the right to see their interests fully represented through a paper's news and editorial columns.

This restricted view of freedom is often justified on the plea, now widely accepted, that the man who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. The voice of the 'have-nots' is, in the very nature of things, incapable of being represented in a capitalist press. If audible at all, it is relegated to the somewhat limited confines of the letters to the editor column. To conclude from this brief breath of freedom that



the press in democratic societies is truly free is only a little less naive than the Soviet press' claim to freedom because it also carries its readers' complaints against some erring bureaucrats.

The realisation of the inadequacies of both types of press, communist and capitalist, is recent. It has given rise in open societies, particularly among journalists, to two different but allied questions. In the underdeveloped world, the question most insistently being asked is press freedom for whom? Or, more specifically, what should be the ownership pattern of the press to ensure its complete freedom; as much from industry as from government?

A brief look here at the state of the press in India helps to contextualise the questions often raised in the developing countries today.

The press situation in India is somewhat mixed. There is, on the one hand, complete freedom of expression, guaranteed by the Constitution. Yet, on the other, what obtains as the press in this country is far from free in the sense of being 'untied' to particular political or economic interests.

Let us consider the case of English daily newspapers published from Delhi (with which alone I am familiar). These seem clearly to fall into two categories: (a) dailies that are 'politically partisan', and (b) dailies that for convenience may be described as 'professional'.

'Political' or 'partisan' dailies are those that, by their charter or because of the policy they consistently follow, are tied to a specific political or party viewpoint. At least three of the national dailies currently published from Delhi fall into this category. They are all newspapers with modest resources and limited circulations. For this reason, they can hardly be said to compete with the so-called 'monopoly' dailies. Part of their handicap, however, is of their own making. They are so politically partisan that their bias is not merely confined to their editorial columns; it often intrudes into their news columns too. Now, if there is one thing that the public in an open society will not accept from its daily newspaper, it is biased or tendentious reporting.

The second, and by far the more important, category of English dailies in India is of the more 'professional' dailies. They are called 'professional' here mainly because unlike the 'partisan' dailies, they do not generally, in their news columns or in their coverage and presentation of news, betray any specific political bias. In times of crisis, when the government's policies affect the big newspaper's interests directly, its news columns may tend to carry a bias, though this is more an exception than the rule.

Four such national dailies are published from Delhi today. Because they obviously do compete with each other, it is doubtful if they can be strictly described as 'monopoly' newspapers, though this is how they are generally described by the small or left-wing press.

There is, however, one sense in which they may truly be regarded as monopolistic, using the term 'monopoly' in its broader sense of excessive concentration of power in the same set of hands. Lumped together, they certainly represent what may be called a sectoral monopoly. For, between them, they claim the large bulk of the total English daily circulation in India. What is more damaging, they are all owned by the same sector of society: big industry. Consequently, they represent the interests of a very limited section of even the capitalist class—the larger industrial houses whose investments are spread out in various basic industries and to which the newspaper investment is ancillary. However professional and impartial in their presentation of news they may be, their editorial columns tend on the whole to show a deep rooted sympathy for their owners' wider interests.

In the developed countries, on the other hand, the question in the form in which it is raised in developing societies, is not as relevant today. For this, there are historical reasons. The early capitalist newspaper-proprietor in the West became in time so involved in the possible future of the object of his creation that he naturally wished to ensure that its character was not changed even after he had done with it. Moved by some such impulse, the more forward-looking among them voluntarily transferred their well-endowed and viable products to genuine trusts with strictly limited powers, thereby insulating a newspaper against interference from their heirs or its future purchasers. It was thus that such professionally 'untied' dailies as the *Manchester Guardian* and the *New York Times* were born.

The trust-owned press in these countries, where today some of the biggest and best dailies more truly seem to realise the ideal of representing the *vox populi* than elsewhere, is as close as we have been able to get to the concept of a free press. The question in the West, therefore, is no longer about the press' ownership pattern; it is rather about its management structure. The form in which the question has with increasing urgency been raised is: with the powerful influence which the communications media now exercise over the individual and society, is it safe to leave their management in the hands of industry? Or should this not be placed in the hands of the profession whose services sustain them?

RASHEED TALIB

# In developing societies

H. Y. SHARDA PRASAD

THE election has proved that our press is free. Free to write what it feels, with as much force as it chooses. Free to endorse or oppose parties, policies, persons. Free to criticise, decry, lampoon and work for the fall of government. Free, if the test is freedom, to preach disaffection towards authority. And free to go wrong, which is the final proof of freedom.

For, the election also showed up many of our newspapers to be somewhat foolish. They found themselves in the position of the king who wore no clothes, their reputation for profundity impaired, their sense of power shattered.

But when campaigning was on, editor, leader writer, special correspondent, reporter and sub wrote with gusto aided by a collective assumption of infallibility. Only the rare ones paused to ask themselves whether they kept wish and fact apart.

There was the case of a leading columnist of the Capital. He stuck to his forecast of '230, give or take a few' until counting day. Had he gone round the country? No, he had had no time. The

reply brought Groucho Marx's quip to mind: Whom will you believe, me, or your own eyes? But one couldn't be too harsh on him. Our country is known to provide evidence for every point of view and also its opposite. It is possible to move about and be wrong. Or stay put and be right.

Error was not a monopoly of the monopoly press. The small and medium newspapers fared no better than the big, the language newspapers than the English, the provincial newspapers than the metropolitan.\* 'Professional' newspapers, to borrow the somewhat doubtful distinction made in the Poser, were not less biased and less partisan than the 'Partisan' newspaper which did not declare its interest, and which did not pray for the confounding of the enemy. Editorials on the edit page and front page, Capital despatches, field reports—all these had a barely concealed pamphleteering tone and intent. The pro-Ruling Party papers were luckier: with the voters' help they proved

\*The writer is careful not to make wholesale or individual charges. He is not to be blamed if some caps are found to fit some heads.

correct. But some of them did deserve their luck through leg work, through ability to use ear and eye, and through analytical acumen.

**T**he soothsayer's discomfiture has made the earnest journalist's lot a little hard. People have begun asking: do newspapers matter? Can they, after their falling-on-their-faces act, claim to be influential? The answer to both questions is yes, but not in the sense that owners and editors have so far thought.

The occasion demands a searching self-analysis on the part of the press, a re-examination of its function, and big changes in its methods. If the press should utilise the experience for this purpose, and shake off its complacency and its habit of over-reacting when it is at the receiving end of criticism, it would be a gain for us all.

Much of the discussion about the press has conventionally tended to revolve around the theme of freedom of the press (and lately around the pattern of ownership), rather than the function and performance of the press. There is some historical justification for this obsession. In the colonial days authority and the press were on opposite sides. The nationalist newspapers made no alliances with government. After freedom was won, the press was very mindful of its own role in the freedom struggle. And it sought a share in power. It overlooked the fact that the press in a true democracy can never be inside the governmental structure. It can only be a political force but not a political institution exercising codified sanctions, notwithstanding the metaphor of the Fourth Estate or the Third Sabha.

The pattern of politics in post-Independence Delhi (and State Capitals) was such that a new interdependence developed between the politician-administrator on the one side and the journalist on the other. The journalist came to consider himself among the kingmakers. In turn he gave exag-

gerated importance to the king-making process. The books and articles written about the two Successions bring out the journalist's vicarious identification with the Kamarajs of the land. According to these accounts there were no forces at work in the country, only persons; no depth to the events, only surface; there was no history to witness, only political games.

Willing newspapermen were exploited by politicians—and a few others without being aware. With editors becoming advisers to politicians rather than remaining rapporteurs to the people, there was little encouragement to non-conformism among colleagues, and little exploration of non-political areas of national activity in their journals.

**T**he press has not done enough to understand and report the vast technological leavening of our society which has taken place in the last two decades and a half, to apprehend and assess the dimensions, contours and consequences of industrialisation, urbanisation and increasing social mobility. A quick survey made for the Press Institute five years ago showed that development accounted for less than 5 per cent of newspaper space. This 5 per cent included the entire range of report and comment on agriculture, industry, education, health, and the welfare of backward classes. A good part of the 5 per cent was made up of reporting legislative debates on these subjects.

Some years ago, a Bangalore newspaper wrote about mistakes in school text-books. Scrutiny showed that the report and editorial were based on an Assembly debate the previous day. The editor had not asked his reporters to look up the books themselves.

There is more of education of the press by the leading legislators than of education of the people by the press on matters of development.

When newspapers write about industry the emphasis is less on

economic-technological aspects than on political-actural aspects—such as the iniquity of controls, the inefficiency of the public sector and favouritism in appointments. In this the editors seem to reflect the interest of their employers. Or they take the cue from the chosen people amidst whom they move, for the Wage Board has had the unintended result of endowing the senior journalists (with exceptions) the attitudes of the propertied class.

In the last few years there has been some improvement in development reporting. The *Times of India* and the *Economic Times* have done some notable work. But enlightened reportage on development is still largely to be found in specialist journals like *The Economic and Political Weekly*.

This is manifestly an editorial failure. The reader does expect a newspaper to take the hard line when its owner's financial interest is threatened. But the plea either of proprietorial wraps or of lack of reader interest cannot be advanced to explain the neglect of education, health and employment. Editors cannot also plead lack of space. Any intelligent person can spend a useful hour with his morning newspaper blue-pencilling items which do not have even marginal readership value, and marking verbiage and repetitiveness which can go out.

**S**mall papers are no angels. If anything, large papers do a little better. They have the resources and the personnel with which to attempt something special. We do need small newspapers to understand regional problems better and to provide scope for rural people to ventilate their views. A vigorous district press can and should be encouraged to act as a counter-vailing force to the metropolitan press. But under the influence of the Jefferson-Gandhi mythology about the grassroots small man, we tend to invest the small newspapers with a higher morality.

The record does not bear out this belief. Here and there one

finds the upright editor-owner of crusading zeal and unbuyable integrity. For the rest, the vendettas the small newspapers are no less vicious than those of the large. Their performance in times of communal tension is not always responsible. On the whole they are less susceptible to the discipline of larger ideas. As Paul Appleby has remarked, local government and politics are generally more corrupt, more cynical, more subject to partisan and economic pressures, and therefore less democratic, than government and politics at the national level where persons and policies function in a larger amplitude.

M. Chalapathi Rau in a recent article quoted Jawaharlal Nehru as wishing for an Indian Northcliffe. To which the Chamber of Commerce type would retort: you will never have a Northcliffe here. Nehru and his successors have devised newsprint controls and a whole range of instruments in their bias against the big press and big industry which will preclude the emergence of a Northcliffe.

**T**he Indian Northcliffe need not be the first man to reach the million figure in circulation. (This magic number cannot be far away, in a seller's market.) He need not be one who will yearn for a visible or invisible Cabinet seat. He has to be the man who will break out of the present formula of the Indian newspaper. Like the Bombay film, the Indian newspaper has its own formula. This is what makes so many of our newspapers read alike, and even look alike. He has to find out what really interests and concerns the common people, hear their words, and bring their very voice into the Press. In other words, our Northcliffe has to be an editorial Northcliffe, not a proprietorial Northcliffe.

The census has just reminded us of the extent of illiteracy in the country. The rate of growth of the simple ability to read must be among the lowest of all our sectoral growth rates—lower than that in agriculture and industry,

lower than the population growth rate. Which means that we have more illiterate people today than ten, twenty, thirty years ago.

Illiteracy promises to be with us for quite some time. Paradoxically this illiteracy is itself a guarantee of the influence of the press. For, the printed word tends to have greater authority when the masses cannot read. The holy books lost their hold only after the spread of primary education.

**T**he prevalence of illiteracy poses a challenge to the press, namely, how to be meaningful to those who cannot read at all. We should not overlook the fact that a copy of a newspaper in India reaches and serves a larger number of people on an average than it does in an advanced country. It is read out to them, or a gist of its contents is given to them. Then there is the radio. It is for the radio newscaster and the newspaper editor to make this direct or second-removed listener or reader feel involved. The aloofness and snobbery which we find in most newspapers, which as a rule are written for the middle classes by representatives of the middle classes, must make way for the true ethos of participatory democracy.

The radio and the newspapers, especially the language newspapers, have to change the pattern and proportion of their contents, their criteria for display, and, what is equally important, their vocabulary.

Politics, in the shape of party, pronouncements, assertions and accusations, or of legislative speeches, protests and filibuster, or of governmental explanation, obfuscation and white-washing could certainly do with less space. These are not always news, even if the status of news is thrust on them. Experience shows that few people read beyond the fourth or fifth paragraph of legislative proceedings on ordinary days. Except for journals of record, reporting of legislative debates is a fruitful area for journalistic economy.

No discussion of the press can leave out the news agencies. The

starting point of a reorganisation of the press is the wire services. They carry too much of second-rate national news and third-rate foreign news. In the name of objectivity and keeping out of controversy they attempt no investigative reporting, especially in economic matters. The two principal news agencies should exercise more selectivity in their political reports and devote the wordage so saved to more imaginative coverage of economic and development news. The small and medium newspapers cannot afford to employ special staff who can understand and interpret the economic scene. They have a right to expect this service from the agencies.

Now to vocabulary. There has been a frightful growth of jargonese in the language newspapers. The departure of literary men who depended upon journalism for primary livelihood and the continued reliance on translation have led to the rise of a stilted, artificial glossary. The spoken word and printed word are drifting away. This is specially unfortunate in radio.

**T**he English newspapers will continue to serve as trend-setters and as the main source of information and opinion for the language press. But, many English newspapers have fallen victim to the kind of elitism which has ill-served the British Press. A comparison between *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* would prove that the clever essayist is no substitute for the good reporter. Many journalistic crimes have been committed in the name of interpretation and style.

The dynamic editor should begin by stopping much of the by-lined mush which is being spread over the pages and demand that his writers move about and meet the people and not be content to circulate amidst informed circles and uninformed squares.

In no country is the press confined to its original role of in-

forming. It is becoming a part of the entertainment industry. As circulations have grown, the entertainment element grows too. This has happened elsewhere. It is bound to happen here. But we are a developing country. A great share of national endeavour goes into building the future. The press cannot but reflect and aid this endeavour. Even its preoccupation with politics, overdone as it is sometimes, is an expression of the desire to shape enduring political institutions. That is why our press conveys a general tone of earnestness. It can preserve and even enhance this purposefulness by extending its concern to areas so far neglected.

All this might appear a tall order. But a start need be made by only one newspaper, or one editorial Northcliffe, in a language. Press-styles catch on.

**T**he function of the press is to find out, understand, report, advocate courses of action, and make the people better informed and better equipped to decide. The greatest newspapers have been marked by the quality of courage. The press has to be free—both of the control of constituted government and of the trammels of owner, advertiser and courtier-like editor—if it has to fulfil this function. An unfree press will not be able to strengthen the intellectual and moral defences of the people. A free press could fail to do so through its own lapses. Those who are champions of press freedom should be equally concerned with the use of that freedom. Mere freedom is no assurance that the work will be well done. The press could be free and ineffective, free and lazy. The lazy editor often raises the bogey of the interfering employer. As elsewhere in a developing society, the need in the Indian Press is for the innovator, and for the person who will think of the many rather than the few. If the press keeps the people at the centre of its attention, it will have an influence far greater than the power to make and unmake the governments of the day.

# Management

P. K. ROY

UNTIL only a few years ago, nobody uttered the word 'management' in respect of a newspaper. A newspaper was a function of the journalist and the freedom of the press being sacred, at least in the free societies, no incursion into the editorial territories in the form of management and even for the cause of survival could be considered anything other than sacrilege. Our involvement with the word freedom was so obsessive that our perspectives were blurred and we often equated the freedom of the press with the freedom of the editor and then extended it to the freedom of the editorial department. If this appears to be an overstatement, the complete subservience of the managerial functions to the journalistic functions in most newspaper offices will not be easy to explain.

That the newspaper organizations, we had just then started calling them an industry, also needed management and preferably able management which would ultimately ensure their survival and prosperity is a recent realisation. The Americans seem to have realised it in the late forties. The years 1946-48 marked the beginning of the drive for the best management and the best editorial product in many newspapers. In that period a quiet revolution began for newspapers which wanted to improve' says Montgomery Curtis, former Director of the

American Press Institute and Vice-President, Knight Newspapers. The American Press Institute was soon established and by 1951 it was holding seminars for training in the fields of management, production, advertising and circulation.

The technological developments since the mid-fifties have been great and far reaching and it can safely be said that the advance made in the printing techniques in the last two decades is more than what was achieved in five centuries since Gutenberg. The American newspapers also started a Research Institute which helped in accelerating the technical achievements.

The total sales of American daily newspapers have kept on growing in the face of stiff competition from other media. Even in the field of advertising, the newspapers have continued to prosper although they have to share the revenue now with television. Curtis feels that the American Press Institute has brought about a happy wedding of editorial excellence with sound management.

**T**he Royal Press Commission which was appointed in the UK in 1961 and whose report was available in 1962 investigated into the economic and social factors governing the production and sales of newspapers. It was to consider these factors in so far as they tended to diminish the diversity of the press in relation to ownership and variety of publications.

The Commission had some rather severe remarks to make about the functioning of the newspapers. The waste of labour in the national newspapers was considered colossal and it was thought that a 30 per cent saving was possible in salary expenditure. Mentioning the *Daily Mirror* (over 6 million copies a day) as a case in point, the Commission observed that an economy of 40 per cent was possible by reducing the staff by 34 per cent. The blame, however, was put both on manage-

ment and the labour unions who did not consider productivity as important.

The Commission also criticised the lack of coordination between departments, particularly between the production and the editorial departments. They found that the press industry did not draw much benefit from the striking technical progress over the last 50 years.

**T**he present day newspaper is a complex business—being at once a profession and an industry. It has to operate similar processes and face the same problems as in any other industry in the areas of sales, finance, production, personnel, etc. With the rapid development of communications systems, rise in the standard of living and literacy, steady increase in urbanisation, the press in India has an expanding market before it. But, if it is to take advantage of the situation, it must apply all the skills and techniques that other industries adopt as a matter of course.

The primary function of a newspaper is to sell. Selling is no longer a simple operation. Vast areas have to be covered by an efficient distribution system and buyers (or readers in this case) have to be found from amongst the various societies whose likes and attitudes are changing fast.

In the fifties, other business adopted the concept of marketing. Marketing embraces a great many responsibilities ranging from product design to product distribution. In brief, marketing has been defined as 'finding a market for the Company's product and finding a product for the company's market'. While the first statement will be accepted without reservation, nobody will accept the second as a management function in the case of newspapers. Who does the function and by what designation he is called is unimportant, if not irrelevant, so long as the person who does it has the skill and the knowledge of the subject and the expertise in the use of available tools. Unfortunately, this is an

area so far ignored in most newspapers in India.

**I**n January 1967, the Economic Intelligence Unit prepared a report after a year's investigation on the problems of the national newspapers in the UK. The Unit was commissioned by the joint board of the National Newspapers Industries which was composed of representatives of newspaper's management and the newspaper trade unions.

It found that only two organisations were proving that modern methods of management were not inconsistent with successful journalism. Most organisations had little or no sophisticated financial control; top management functions were imprecisely defined and little interest was shown in long term planning or training for the future. Communications between different departments of the business were poor.

The Unit further reported that the quality of management was uneven and the industry was short of trained professional managers. In a closely knit industry like the national press, one management could create trouble for all. Therefore, the problem of shortage and quality of managers must be solved on an industry basis, the report said.

The Unit noted the absence of a proper marketing organisation working on behalf of advertising and circulation departments; and this was a major defect in most companies.

There was a complete lack of production engineering practices in the newspaper industry. There was ignorance over what such simple techniques like work-study or net-work analysis could do.

The EIU, calculated a potential saving of £4.8 millions a year in the production departments of London newspapers, if realistic manning standards were applied and this the Unit said was a very cautious estimate.

The Unit found that of the eight national daily papers, excluding

the *Financial Times* which is a specialised publication, four were operating at a loss and one was losing money as a newspaper but was making a profit on its fringe activities. Only three daily newspapers were operating profitably.

The Unit forecast that if the cost structure continued unchanged, one quality daily newspaper, two popular dailies and one quality Sunday newspaper would be forced to cease publication in the next five years.

**T**he first predicted casualty has taken place this year. *The Daily Sketch*, a tabloid, closed and merged with the *Mail*. This is the first national daily to close down since the folding of *The News Chronicle* in 1960. Perhaps the foreboding of the Economic Intelligence Unit stimulated British newspapers into introspection and improvement. For, the National Incomes and Prices Board, while considering a request of price increase of newspapers, observed in 1970 that there had been considerable improvement in the management of newspapers.

The Board said that the Economic Intelligence Unit in 1967 was sharply critical of the inadequacy of budgetary planning and financial control in newspapers. 'There has been considerable improvement since then and some offices have developed systems which compare favourably with the best in other industries'. The Board observed that in the past national newspapers had been criticised for the lack of marketing skills. A real attempt has recently been made to put this right. Although market and motivational research was now used quite considerably, there was a need for further research, particularly to assist the editorial planning of newspapers. Modern selling techniques were now being extensively used in the field of classified advertisements.

It may be recalled that in October 1967, the same Prices and Incomes Board rejected a proposal for increase in the price of the *Daily Mirror* by 1 pence. In its

report, the Prices and Incomes Board stressed that the newspaper industry must first put its house in order before it put up prices or sought government assistance. The *Daily Mirror*, it felt, could cut its manning costs by some 25 per cent to 30 per cent.

The scene in the UK or in the USA is not comparable with the scene in India. Yet, the situation there is worth a study as it indicates the key to the survival of newspapers in a world exposed to new and novel media of communications, and will be relevant when survival and growth of newspapers in India are to be considered.

In the UK, readership is shrinking, the advertisement market is not growing as fast as the publishers want it to and costs are increasing. In India, costs of course are increasing but the market is expanding and even in the advertising field competition from commercial radio is not yet unbearable.

**I**nnovation, improvement and evolution are not yet the instruments for survival but sooner than later their absence will be felt. Costs are going up steadily and steeply. Other media will grow. Newspapers will be required to shake off their complacency and try new and developed technology for producing better and faster. Competent marketing men will have to locate and persuade readers and find new sources of revenue. A stage will come when the relative importance and dependability of the different sources of revenue will have to be studied and a decision will have to be taken of what should be made the staple.

It is in these directions that management's contribution will be significant and unavoidable. More journalistic excellence will not lead to the objectives. If the press has to survive, it has to grow. If it does not grow, freedom will only be its epitaph.

It is not marketing alone that requires competent management

for the success of the enterprise. Management talent is also needed in other areas like production, planning and research, for reduction of costs, for utilisation of resources and material. This will not sound like a truism if one recalls the findings of The Royal Press Commission, the Economic Intelligence Unit and the Prices and Incomes Board in an industrially developed and technologically advanced country like England.

**T**he need for sound management has not yet been universally felt in India. The reasons are not difficult to see. Indian newspapers have no doubt grown in the last two decades, but their growth has been nowhere near phenomenal. Axel Springer, a publishing house in West Germany started after World War II, today consumes 3,50,000 tons of newsprint a year, nearly double of India's consumption of newsprint. Nor can we hope to achieve such magnitudes of size when we are already concerned with monopoly and concentration. Rationing of newsprint in the name of foreign exchange shortage is smothering the initiative of the enterprising and the efficient and is providing an ample umbrella to the others. But the result of this has been quite the opposite of what was intended.

Dr. Ashok Desai, in a study sponsored by the Press Institute of India (to be published shortly), has found that during the decade of restriction on the use of newsprint, there has been a fall in the ratio of newspaper circulation to the literate population. He concludes that government policy has been inimical to the mass-circulation Indian language newspapers. The policy has encouraged proliferation of newspapers and has effected a drag on circulation. Compared to Japan, India has double the number of newspapers per literate—while the diffusion rate of daily newspapers (among the literate population) is one

tenth of Japan. This is a dangerous trend, a reversal of which, essential for the growth of the press, is possible only by a change of government policy.

All this is not to imply that only good management will make successful newspapers. Good management has to be matched by bright journalistic performance. Journalists in their turn must be equipped with education and training to perform their tasks. There are, no doubt, editors who see far beyond the projections of research or experience. There will be editors who can innovate without the aid of tools like motivational research, who know the pulse of their readers and can produce what they will like. But most of them would do better with training and with the tools for analysis and interpretation. A readership survey, for example, is a better tool than an editor's hunch about his readers.

Besides toning up the quality of management in the newspapers, it is time that members of the editorial department are given some idea of the responsibilities and methods of the management personnel. The editor should be included in the top management team which will help him in appreciating the business requirements, the realisation of which need not necessarily compromise the editorial attitudes of the paper.

**H**aving planned for economic viability and therefore its stability, it is time to see how the freedom of the press can be maintained and for what benefit to society. This is a question that has disturbed every free society and still continues to do so. One after the other, the European democracies have set up commissions or special bodies to determine how best the freedom of the press can be maintained, how a variety of opinion can be aired through diversity of ownership and how monopoly and concentration can be avoided.

The British Royal Commission was satisfied that economic viability was essential for the freedom

of the press and suggested cost reduction as a means. It rejected the idea of an advertising tax to curb the monopolistic tendencies and also rejected a proposal for subsidies. It recommended that a body be set up to control mergers involving a purchasing group whose total weekly circulation was more than three million copies either before or after the merger. It favoured more powers to the Press Council.

**I**n 1968, a Press Commission in West Germany confirmed that the development in the past years constituted a threat to press freedom and recommended that a limit be put on the share of the market so that the diversity of the press was maintained. In its opinion, the freedom of the press was threatened when a single publisher accounted for 20 per cent of the total circulation of all daily newspapers and the freedom was harmed when a publisher cornered 40 per cent of the market.

The Commission recommended the granting of State assistance for the foundation of new newspapers. It also recommended that government give priority to small and medium size publishers and guarantee credit, revision of postal rates and some tax benefits.

The government, however, did not agree that the imposition of a limit on a fraction of the market, which any one concern may control, would not help solve the problems likely to affect the freedom of press.

Sweden, perhaps, is the only country which decided to give subsidies to newspapers, but had to abandon the proposal and not the idea, owing to protests from the public. It now gives subsidies to political parties and hopes that the political parties will give at least a part of the subsidy to maintain their newspapers.

All those countries seem to be content with ensuring the existence of a variety of newspapers voicing many shades of opinion. They do not seem to be concerned with the more fundamental issue that the variety of newspapers

may be owned by people of the same class or strata of society.

We must not overlook the fact that we have an imposing array of newspaper owners, ranging from the dedicated journalist to the 'involved' industrialist and that a large number of our major newspapers, particularly in the Indian languages are controlled and owned by 'independent' persons. In India this question is therefore still theoretical. There can certainly be a tendency of newspapers being owned by men of money or those connected with other industries due to the forces of economy in future.

The economy of a newspaper has been somewhat different by tradition. The cost of production of a newspaper is much higher than the price at which it is sold. A survey undertaken by Dr. Ashok Desai (referred earlier) showed that the annual cost of a single copy of an English paper was Rs. 191-98 and that of an Indian language paper Rs. 50-68. The daily cost per copy then comes to 52 paise and 14 paise respectively. Presuming that the English newspaper was being sold at 20 paise and the other at 10 paise, the balance of the amount has to be made up from other revenue, in this case advertising. It is not possible to increase the prices to recover the entire cost from the reader. Writing in *Vidura* (May 69) Indramadan and Chalkley established that when related to the readers incomes, Indian newspapers are five times as expensive as British newspapers. In 1969, *The Times* cost 2 s. 6 d. to produce and sold for 6 d. per copy.

**S**mall circulations will attract little advertising. Pitted against the massive monopoly medium of commercial radio and perhaps eventually of television, the small newspapers will find its existence in jeopardy. It has, therefore, to grow bigger (forgetting the government criteria of considering a newspaper with a sale of 50,000 copies as big). The newspaper industry is subject to economies of scale in the sense that the larger a paper's sales, the larger



the number of copies over which it can distribute its overheads and fixed costs. As a result, it can lower its price or increase its profits and the increased profit can be used to make the paper more attractive—thereby, further increasing the readership.

**G**rowth has problems too. It means investment of large amounts of money, since prices of equipment have gone up considerably. Finance then will have to be raised and the tragedy is that it will not be easily available as newspapers have a long incubation period and the profit ratio is much lower than in most industries. Investment from the public at large being difficult, it will perhaps have to come from somebody or some group who has the money. Newspapers have a tendency to lose money for a number of years in the beginning and that is another reason why capital cannot easily be raised from the public. If indeed the ownership of newspapers by people of one strata of society is harmful or at least unwelcome, we must find other means of raising funds and sustaining losses, till the establishment stands on its feet.

With the development of technology involving sophisticated equipment and the catering to mass markets, the problems of investments and finance will become more tricky. Government subsidy is certainly un-welcome. But, the only other way by which the ownership of newspapers can be diversified, is to make it easier for the people to start newspapers. The Swedish way is another, but one shudders to think that unless one belongs to a political party one has no hopes of having one's grievances known. For, a political party is partisan by definition and it can certainly ignore the existence of one who does not belong to it. Strangling of the big newspapers may provide satisfaction to some but will provide no relief to any.

Government must also facilitate the growth of the existing newspapers and not merely their pro-

liferation. Unfair competition should be curbed by a vigilant Press Council. The Government can even promote systems which will help distribution of papers and remove the weaknesses of distribution systems of smaller newspapers. The Swedish Government, for instance, introduced a scheme of subsidy in 1969 to help newspapers in the matter of distribution. The scheme entitles a newspaper to a government subsidy if the newspaper is willing to forego competition in the field of distribution in favour of joint distribution systems.

There should be a reduction in import duty on equipment and machinery, photographic material, a revision of the postal rates and air freight rates, and a Central Corporation to provide finances to those who are unconnected with any industries and have been running a newspaper. It is only then that a diversity of ownership may be possible for the benefit of the society. It is not possible to promote any more without interference or control which will be a negation of freedom. Ultimately, the people can surely be left to their discretion in choosing and supporting 'their' newspaper, if they can be left to choose their government.

#### Post script

Subsequent events have proved some of the observations in the article (written in April 1971) wrong. In India, I said that the question of monopoly and concentration was still theoretical. The draft press bill or the working paper on the press reveals how wrong that observation was.

Fortunately, the facts mentioned in the article remain true and nothing so far has emerged from the rather one-sided debate to affect the conclusions. This is not the place to discuss the 'press bill' except in so far as it destroys or protects the freedom of the press.

Is the freedom of the press in this country in danger? Until now nobody has said so seriously. There has been a great deal of debate on monopoly and concent-

ration. Will the press bill, by enforcing diffusion of ownership, curb the growth of monopolies? How can it, one will ask, when monopoly is a matter of markets and diffusion is of ownership?

The Press Registrar's latest year book says that 65 common ownership houses accounted for 70.6 per cent sales of the daily newspapers. The largest of these houses controlled less than 10 per cent of the market.

In Canada, a senate sub-committee investigating into the affairs of the press found last year that 14 houses accounted for 77 per cent share of the market. The committee voiced its concern over monopolies but did not conclude that monopoly conditions existed in Canada. The West German Press Commission's recommendations on this subject and the Government's reaction have been mentioned in the article. Why does not our Press Council investigate the situation here? One of the very purposes of founding the Press Council was that it would undertake such investigations and suggest remedies.

Diffusion certainly will delink the press from the industry and check 'oligopoly'. But industry has connections with four major groups of newspapers and 'delinking' will affect only less than 25 per cent of the daily newspaper market and an insignificant part of the periodical market.

**O**ne of the pre-requisites of press freedom is its economic viability. The press bill ignores this altogether. Diffusion of ownership, specification of control by others than owners and curbing of the successful newspapers will not bring it. The bill will certainly not promote the growth of the press. To attain the minimum dissemination rate prescribed by UNESCO for effective communication (one copy for 10 readers), India should sell 54 million copies of newspapers every morning. It will be well to remember that today we sell only nine million; the 1970 Report of the Registrar states a figure of only 7.8 million.

# Social responsibility

SUMANTA BANERJEE

THE expression 'credibility gap' has gained much currency, ever since reports in Indian newspapers about the early successes of the Bangla Desh liberation forces were found to be magnified.

But, one tends to lose sight of the fact that such a gap has been present in the Indian press for years. The tendency to make events unevents and *vice versa* in our newspapers is prompted by various considerations—the journalist's commitments to the commercial interests of his employer, his desire to tempt the taste for scandal of the mob, or simply the correspondence of his political partisanship with his employer's. In the case of the Bangla Desh reportage, however, it appears to have stemmed from an innocent wishful thinking—the fond hope that the liberation forces would win the struggle within a few days.

News black out, imposed later by the advancing Pakistan forces, bred wild rumours like the death of General Tikka Khan or the escape of Sheikh Mujibur to India. Our newspapers made the most of any hopeful sign. While exaggera-

tions based on such thinking indicated a pitiable lack of any sense of responsibility, by hindsight they could be dismissed as less dangerous. This cannot be said of some reports on Bangla Desh in Indian and foreign newspapers, which betrayed a mischievous tentatiousness. These reports sought to pose the entire fight in Bangla Desh as one between Punjabis and Bengalis, thus encouraging provincial tensions within India. Some stressed the atrocities on the Hindus in a bid to give it a communal tone.

The foreign newspapers did not miss the opportunity for retailing a few grim events to the discredit of the liberation forces. The London *Times*, for instance reported 'the massacre of Punjabi settlers' in Jessore in March and quoted 'eyewitnesses' who detected 'half alive and bloody bodies of men whom we recognized as the Punjabi prisoners we had seen an hour before.' They also saw another '40 Punjabi spies being taken towards the killing ground with their hands on their heads, irregulars pushing them in the back with primitive guns, before they

were forced to leave the scene by the supporters of Sheikh Mujib.'

'The *Daily Telegraph* of March 29 said: 'The genie of Bengali nationalism and separatism is now well and truly out of the bottle.'

While most of the British papers belittled the genocide of the East Bengalis at the beginning, those few British reporters who agreed to report it sought to present it in the traditional framework of Hindu-Muslim riots. Thus, Colin Smith's despatch in the 'Observer', London, dated April 17, read: 'Some of the West Pakistan units seem to have been possessed by blood-lust directed against the Hindus of East Pakistan, recalling the massacre of 1947 at the time of partition.' Why did he fail to notice that Bengali Muslims were also victims of the 'blood-lust'?

The Bangla Desh coverage therefore, whether in Indian or in foreign dailies, has brought to the fore again the old problem of partisanship and objectivity in reporting.

One cannot expect in a partisan world the popular press to be non-partisan. Nor is it possible for an individual journalist to empty his mind of all sympathies or prejudices and be absolutely impartial. But what one expects of him is honesty—honesty to those attacked as well as to those defended. It is required that facts should not be distorted to bolster up a bad case or make a good one stronger.

It is in this respect precisely that the Indian press has proved to be a miserable failure. The personal uses to which a proprietor puts his paper are too blatant; the attacks and insinuations are too whimsical; the mis-representations and half-truths are too ill-concealed.

The present day newspaper proprietors do not set much store by the famous remark made by C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*: 'Comment is free, but facts are sacred.' The liberty which is taken with facts in our news-

papers makes a mockery of the term 'freedom of the press.'

While the language papers usually play on popular fears and hopes and stampede the readers into hysteria on occasions like communal riots, the English language papers news columns betray a bias in favour of property, and the status quo. This became eloquent during the Congress split and the implementation of measures like bank nationalization.

Here, for instance, are some of the blaring headlines on bank nationalization in the leading English dailies of India. 'Madhok warns against bank takeover move.' (*Hindustan Times*, July 15, 1969). 'Nationalization no panacea—Kamath's plea for banking corporation.' (*Free Press Journal*, July 15). 'Banks takeover move a stunt—C. Rajagopalachari' (*Indian Express*, July 16). 'Tragic error—Tata' (*Statesman*, July 21). The reactions of political leaders favouring nationalization were invariably relegated to obscure corners deep inside the pages. If one remembers the nature of ownership of these papers, one can well understand that the headlines highlighted the point of view of the proprietors.

It would be interesting to compare the headlines with the editorials in the respective papers and discover the same bias. Here for instance is the *Hindustan Times* editorial of July 21: 'The Indian economy is still in the early phase of recovery after the years of drought and recession and the shock of bank nationalization may again subject it to unbearable strain.' In the *Indian Express* of the same date, its editor, Frank Moraes, wrote: 'Sometimes one wonders whether India is ruled from Delhi or Moscow. Mrs Gandhi's over-dramatic nationalization of banks will doubtless earn her the plaudits of the Kremlin. . . How safe the people's money will be in nationalized banks remain to be seen'. The *Statesman* editorial on the issue, dated July 28, said: 'The regimentation of the economy and the sacrifice of its

interests for the sake of personal pique or political opportunism are matters which cannot be too strongly deplored.'

But, bias in the matter of comments in the editorial column of a paper is to a certain extent, inevitable, and might even be considered natural since a newspaper is also a vehicle for the expression of opinion. One would have however expected that bias was not permitted to affect prejudicially the presentation of news.

In spite of a consistent campaign in the editorial columns and reports in these papers against the ruling party's economic policies, and predictions of its defeat at the polls, the overwhelming majority of their readers apparently voted for the same ruling party. Perhaps those who read the editorials and reports take them no more seriously than they would the political utterances of a casual acquaintance in a tea shop or a bus. Such a state of affairs only pinpoints the fact that neither as critic, reporter, interpreter or an expounder, does a newspaper command acceptance in this country.

The 'credibility gap' widens further when it comes to the reporting of Leftist activities or of events in a State ruled by Leftists. Distortion of facts can nowhere be more blatant. During the United Front regime in West Bengal in 1969, there were some disturbances at a cultural function in Rabindra Sarobar, Calcutta. News of the incident first appeared in a Calcutta daily, after at least two days had passed, implying thus that the reporter had not been to the spot during the events. Other dailies were quick to follow, each vying with the other in reporting 'eye witness accounts' of sordid details, like the molestation and raping of women. The whole affair was finally reduced to a damp squib when a judicial inquiry proved that tiny scraps of fact had been exaggerated out of all recognition.

Most of these newspapers, including the so-called national

dailies, often betray an abominable lack of social responsibility. They report certain incidents in a tendentious manner, calculated to cause tension in the public mind and then ignore the findings of a judicial inquiry if the results contradict the earlier reports. This happened in the case of an incident in Calcutta during the first United Front regime of West Bengal. On March 27, 1967, there were some violent clashes involving Sikhs and Bengalis. They caught the headlines of most of the Delhi newspapers. After about two years, the results of the judicial inquiry into the incidents confirmed that certain vested interests provoked the incidents to bring the United Front Government into disrepute. None of the newspapers published the news. Only one Calcutta daily—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*—carried a brief excerpt of the findings on April 25, 1969.

**B**ut, one of the most contemptibly irresponsible campaigns in Indian journalistic history was the series of reports on the deteriorating law and order situation of Calcutta during the United Front regime in the early months of 1970, carried by an English daily of Calcutta. One particular report was published on its front page in February which was a string of horrifying stories of robbery abduction and rape based on interviews with the victims. The report caused a lot of panic among the citizens and the Home Department of the West Bengal Government conducted an inquiry into the alleged incidents. It found that except for one, none of the incidents had occurred. Regarding one incident, where a woman was supposed to have been abducted and later died in a nursing home, the police approached the editor of the paper seeking further particulars of the victim and to trace her relations. But the editor had nothing to add to what had already appeared in his paper.

The Home Department later issued a statement accusing the paper of publishing a report based

mostly on falsehoods and challenged it to supply to the government in the public interest, concrete facts, if it had, in support of its report.

Instead of making any effort to substantiate the controversial report, the paper came out with an amazing editorial, purporting to be a reply to the Home Department statement. In a brazen-faced attempt to justify its lapses, it flaunted its claim to waive all objectivity: '... in the present West Bengal context the responsibility of the Press would seem to be to reflect the widespread sense of insecurity and the fears and inhibitions that accompany it. The Press cannot reasonably be expected to "authenticate" incidents...'

Such an open admission of departure from traditional journalistic ethics can only be possible in a situation where newspapers are fast becoming the properties of people for whom extra-journalistic considerations are paramount—the textile magnate, the jute magnate, the cement producer and the steel producer—people who could not care less about accurate presentation of news, so long as their newspapers remained a source of political influence, a vehicle for vendettas against political rivals.

A late-Victorian British journalist, H. J. Palmer, of the *Yorkshire Post* once said: 'The British press as a commercial undertaking is controlled by capitalists. As a moral force it is controlled by journalists.'

**I**n India in recent years, the control of journalists on the moral aspect of the press has suffered a gradual erosion. There has been a diminution in the status of the editor to no more than a paid servant of proprietorial interests. Few editors dare to stand up to the directors. One understands that the financial rewards offered are very great. But, very few editors realize that the loss in human dignity is greater.

The commercialization of newspapers is nowhere more evident

than in the ratio of advertisements to news. Contrary to the recommendations of the Press Commission, the ratio in the major newspapers continue to be 70:30 (70 per cent advertisements and 30 per cent news). The present importance of newspapers seems to lie in their ability to put advertisers in touch with the mass of consumers. It is no wonder then that the role of the journalists has shrunk in consonance with this growing trend.

**T**he issue of freedom of the press has therefore taken on a different and, in some ways, a more complicated form. Freedom of the press should not mean the freedom of the newspaper owners to suppress news or exaggerate events. The press has obligations too—obligations to the past, for newspapers would never have known freedom if earlier men had not been ready to sacrifice themselves for principles; obligations to the present also, for the press is as much a custodian of national freedom as Parliament.

While the proprietor's dictates to suppress news in his extra-journalistic interests, should certainly be resisted, it should be remembered that on certain occasions a very faithful report of a particular incident might be an irresponsible act. A recent instance is perhaps worth mentioning. When the formation of the Bangla Desh Government was formally announced in April in Mujibnagar, Indian and foreign journalists were invited to the function. Their reports the next day mentioned the exact location of Mujibnagar and the West Pakistan army promptly bombed the place the same afternoon.

Between the right to report and the independence to use it therefore there is a wide gap. The individual journalist's role assumes importance in this context. Should his commitments to the commercial or extra-journalistic interests of his employers be more important than his obligations to

society? Should he be meticulously objective even at the risk of betraying secrets to the enemy? It is by the manner and degree in which these dual compulsions are reconciled that the press is properly to be judged.

**I**t is necessary therefore to provide the journalist with a safeguard against those pressures to which he finds himself vulnerable, particularly the pressure of his employer. The best guarantee would be to strengthen the professional element in the press and to set up a professional power to act as a counter-balance to the immense and growing power of financial control in the newspaper industry.

The answer to the monopoly press is certainly not 'Government control' or nationalization of newspapers. The government can equally restrict the free functioning of the press to shield itself against adverse criticism. As early as 1966, Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi expressed the government's sensitivity to criticisms in the press, when addressing the International Press Institute Assembly in New Delhi on November 15 that year. She blamed the Indian newspapers for spreading student unrest throughout the country by giving publicity to students' agitation. She posed a question: 'How much liberty should the press have in a country like India which is engaged in fighting a war on poverty, backwardness, superstition and ignorance?' She was however wise enough not to threaten the press with punishments like nationalization. The government was also quick, during the height of the crisis in the Congress in 1969, when Mrs Gandhi again expressed her dissatisfaction with the press comments on bank nationalization, to repudiate speculations that it would take over the newspapers.

Nationalization of the press would only replace the industrial magnates with government bureaucrats, who have already made a mess of the public sector. Patronage of government advertisements, distribution of perquisites and the

other familiar forms of corruption would invariably follow.

The other sources which often threaten the unrestricted freedom of the press are the privileges of Parliament and State legislatures. There seems to be an irresolvable conflict between the freedom of the press and the proved privilege of the House which exercise absolute control over publication of its deliberations. Both are guaranteed by the Constitution. The Press Commission urged an early codification of these privileges of Parliament and State legislatures. In any case, the restrictions arising from this source are applicable only to a particular sphere of journalism—Parliamentary reporting.

**B**ut, it is quite obvious that the main threat to the free functioning of the press as a whole, is neither the government, nor Parliament, but comes from within—the owners of the newspapers. The ability of Indian journalists to forestall a future takeover by the government or to assert their rights vis-a-vis Parliament will depend on their success in purging the newspapers of extra-professional, industrial interests and in emerging as an independent force to take place beside a free Parliament as a defensive institution of a democratic State.

The solution of the problem therefore has to be found by means of direct participation of employees, particularly journalists, in the management of newspapers. It should be seen that the editorial policy is determined with the consent of the journalists.

In the newspaper world in India, the attitude of helplessness born of the view that the man who pays the piper has the right to call the tune, is so widespread, that any demand for journalists' participation in the management of newspapers, is bound to be pooh-poohed. The final excuse for a journalist in our country is the claim that he is, after all, simply a hired man who must do as he is bid.

But, in some countries of the West, the journalists have not only

started asserting their rights, they have also been able to exercise them. In 1951, the editor of *Le Monde* of France, Bèuve-Méry was faced with an ultimatum from two of his directors and felt compelled to resign on an issue of policy. The entire editorial staff of the paper refused to continue with the paper unless the ultimatum was withdrawn and he was restored to full authority. They not only won their demands, but finally succeeded in drawing up an agreement which compelled the board to agree that in future 28 per cent of the share capital of the paper should be vested in the editorial staff, so that never again should one or two major share holders be in a position to infringe the independence of the editor.

In a charter of demands, the French journalists have asked for a veto power in the choice of the publisher, a special professional status for journalists which would reduce the rights of a publisher to alter their articles, and legislation to require the publishers to sell them 35 per cent of the stock of the companies they work in so that while participating in the profits they can have a veto right on vital decisions affecting the papers.

**W**ith a reasonable diversification of ownership in the newspaper industry, the proprietorial grip on the journalist's personal freedom can be eliminated to a great extent. Only in such a situation can a journalist's talents come into full play and his sense of responsibility face the challenge of the world of events. No longer inhibited by extra-professional controls, the journalist's view of what is interesting or important will determine what goes into a story and what is omitted. His personal ideals, professional standards and sense of values will determine his receptivity to certain impressions. The restrictions imposed by the Constitution and the law of libel and defamation can be adequate safeguards against any danger that such a freedom might pose.

# The lost estate

KUMAR KETKAR

'If we could know first where we are, whither we are heading, we could better judge what to do and how to do it.'

Synchronous with the declaration of the mid-term election last January, was another declaration. Declaration of a war. A total war. By the Press—against Mrs. Gandhi. The Myths and Realities were invented. The 'learned' Special Correspondents drove their limousines far and wide in the country. Made ominous forecasts. Delivered pompous pontifications. The tirade was on.

Then came the election results. Had these gentlemen of the press remembered Eliot's view of life's ending, they would not have dared this mistake. But they did. And their campaign ended; with a whimper. Indra Gandhi's party was in with an inconceivable majority.

In the mad rush that began in the press later, for self introspection, diagnosis of what had gone wrong, where etc., etc., is reflected the agony of the Indian Press: an Estate that is lost; at least for the time being.

'Why all this confusion? Where is our press really? Has it found its grooves? Has it cemented its base? Has it a readership at all? These are the crucial questions the observers of the press in this country have to answer. And they find it a very painful task.

Is there a press in India?

Y. V. L. Rao<sup>1</sup> studied two villages in Mysore: 'Kothuru', having a population of 2992 and 'Pathuru'

having a population of 2617. In Kothuru, 28 copies of newspapers were available for 2992 people and in Pathuru 5 copies for 2617 people. That is, one copy for 107 people in Kothuru and one copy for 523 people in Pathuru. One must not forget that there are only some 450,000 copies available in all for non-urban readers of India's nearly 2500 small towns and 5,67,000 villages in which live 360 million people.

D. N. Majumdar<sup>2</sup> gives a very interesting account of the resistance in the village to the acquisition of 'useless information'. 'Newspapers are not popular among the villages and even if they are supplied to them free of cost, they would not benefit them. One reason for this unpopularity of newspapers is the illiteracy of the villagers. If one reads out the news to them, they listen, but that only for a shortwhile; there is so much work to be done that they cannot afford to waste their precious time in such 'trash' (so it appears to them). One of the investigators of the Department of Anthropology used to read out the papers to them sometimes. The first day there were many people sitting around him, then as days passed by, their interest ebbed, and the investigator had to give up reading the papers to them'—so goes Majumdar's account.

But alas! These hard facts dug out by concerned researchers have hardly made any impact on the Press Lords of this country. They are still living G. K. Chesterton's quip: 'Modern newspaper is a wonderful means of communication through which our civilisation

1. 'Communication and Development', Y.V.L. Rao.

2. 'Urban future of India' edited by Roy Turner.

Year	Dailies	*Weeklies	Others	Total	Circulation Total
1959	465	1741	3910	6096	1,69,01,000
1964	560	2311	5290	8161	2,42,13,000
1969	702	2973	6606	10281	2,69,64,000

\*Including tri and bi-weeklies.

everyday proclaims that it has nothing to say'. And there is the Press Registrar's Report projecting a 'rosy' picture of increasing circulation every year.<sup>3</sup>

But the tragedy is that these figures represent hollow numbers.

In 1952, there were 330 dailies with a circulation of 2.5 million. By the end of 1969 their number had risen to 650 (excluding tri and bi-weeklies) and their circulation to about 7.7 million—an apparently impressive increase of 96 per cent in number and 200 per cent in circulation. But these increases lose much of the impact in the presence of 165 million literates in the country to whose ranks 9 million more are being added every year.

There were 10,281 publications in India in 1969 as against 6096 publications in 1959 and in this decade total circulation rose to 26.9 million from 16.9 million, i.e., an addition of 1 million copies every year against an increase of 14 million people and 9 million literates every year. In 1971, the population is 547 million and the literate population is 165 million. According to the Planning Commission, the population is likely to go up to 666 million in 1978-79 and 690 million in 1980-81. Even the number of literates which was only 61 million in 1951 and 165 million in 1971 should be well over 350 million in 1980.

If we continue to add only one million copies every year, then over all circulation would be around 36 million. Even if we do some miraculous progress in the press and add two million copies each year, our circulation figure would not reach a 50 million mark

—against 350 million would-be literates.

If we look at these puzzling figures, we can understand what kind of a 'still-born, ungrowing child we are talking about'.

Even as it is now, the newspapers have remained only newspapers—a few pages of print available for a few paise—and not a 'Press'—a movement which can have an impact on the people, mould their opinion, guide them, etc.

What makes the Indian Press so isolated? Its affliction is not external. It is a structural disease, woven tightly into the system. One big malady the Indian Press suffers from is its pretensions to effect public opinion. Realistically speaking, it has none. In almost all the cases it has proved it. Its towers are built high and away from the minds of the masses. Its brainy aloofness makes it infra-dig in reporting masses back to them. A small analysis of what our press covers and to whom it caters is enough to prove this point. In the AUF report service, 1962, Ravenhold observed that in a twelve page Delhi daily 46 out of 93 total stories were about ministers, government releases and Parliament.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi, when she was Information and Broadcasting minister commented on the limited space given by the press for economic and social development. A quick check by the Press Institute of India proved her point.<sup>4</sup> No more than five per cent of the space was given to these topics either as news, editorials, features or letters to the editor. Another contents analysis of 8 top English and language dailies revealed that they devote

only eight per cent of the total news space to developmental news. The space devoted ranged from a tolerable 14.77 per cent in the *Hindu* to a miserable 2.15 per cent in the *Indian Express*.

The arrogance of their elitism may make these press lords feel that reporting of the developmental news is an uninteresting job. But have they cared to carry out their obligation towards reporting social change? Never. A study made by the PII on the coverage of social change in four English and some language newspapers revealed that this vast area of activity comprised agriculture, co-operatives, urban development, housing, health, education and social welfare is regarded by our newspapers as meriting roughly an entry a day and between 6 to 11 inches of space. This is another underdeveloped area of the Indian press. What little they do in this subject is made up of government handouts or reports of parliamentary proceedings or speeches—which means that barring editorials the newspapers do very little on their own to report social change. In the words of H. Y. Sharada Prasad, 'It means that what Pandit Nehru used to call the wonderful adventure of building up a new India excites the Indian press very little'.<sup>5</sup>

There is another reason for this apathy. Who has to undertake this task? The district newspapers can ill-afford it, because it involves travelling, which in turn means money. The big newspapers have the money but the personnel manning it, is composed of the urban middle class which is of a different breed.

Then, let us have a look at the concentration of newspapers in the cities. Of the 702 dailies, 564 dailies are published from cities having a population of 1 lakh and above. It is not merely that concentration or the centres of publication are in the cities—but also their circulation. Ninety per cent of the sales of our daily news-

3. 'Press in India' 1961, 1970.

4. 'The Press and the Community', Press Institute of India.

5. 'The Press and the Community', Press Institute of India.

papers are restricted to about 10 per cent of the total population who live in the cities—large or small.

It is only natural that the English language newspapers will have their circulation in the cities. But amazingly and unfortunately the same is true of the Indian language newspapers (except Malayalam).

Out of 2508 total publications in Hindi, 1623 are published from cities having a population of above 1 lakh. The Hindi-speaking population according to the 1961 census was 13,34,35,560. The average literacy of the Hindi-speaking area is 22 per cent. The circulation of Hindi dailies is 11,75,000, i.e., 40 copies per 1000 Hindi-speaking literates and 7 copies per 1000 Hindi-speaking people.<sup>6</sup>

Or take the case of the Marathi publications. Out of a total number of 622 publications, 431 are published from cities (i.e., about 68 per cent). Eighteen copies per 1000 Marathi-speaking people is certainly not a good record for the most industrialised State of India. (Marathi-speaking population according to the 1961 census was 3,32,86,771 and the circulation of 60 Marathi dailies was 7,29,000 (1969).

All these facts draw us to one question. Does the Indian press have any hold on the pulse of the people? A press which is incapable of involving the people is not worth its name. That precisely is the Indian press today. Its readership is urban-based. Rural readership is totally isolated. Its coverage of news is on conservative lines, its pages have religiously boycotted developmental news, it is totally oblivious of surroundings; for it the news is still 'man bites dog'; the criteria are borrowed from the Western press; the too much repeated archaic objectivity continues as its beacon light. It doesn't want to realise that as an organ of a developing society, it has the scope of being a tool of development itself. It is happy otherwise—in the self-built ivory

towers of pious platitudes, untiring concern for press freedom.

Has anybody in the press honestly questioned whether press freedom has any meaning for the 'man-in-the-street' whom they suppose they are writing for? If tomorrow press freedom goes in this country, the common villager in India has nothing to bother about. The freedom which was of no consequence to him is not his concern. The words of freedom of thought and free consciousness sound too hollow and distant and the luxury of caring for them is something which he cannot afford.

Even among the people to whom it caters, the press delimits its circle to only a selected few. The ordinary educated common man in the cities cannot understand the lofty language which the press speaks. It only requires the 'elite few' to do that and this is precisely the class with which the Indian press is content.

The term 'monopoly' is aired too often to need any explanation. Let us listen to the people who did a lot of spadework on this subject: 'The term "monopoly" is used here to signify sales of one particular newspaper in a preponderating majority of the total sales of all papers and to the practical exclusion of other papers' said the

Press Commission<sup>7</sup> and went on to deal with the regular defence put up by the big press (of editorial freedom): 'In multiple units of the same paper, the editorial policy is generally identical. A considerable degree of latitude has, we found, been permitted to the editors of individual units belonging to groups, chains and combines, and often the greatest uniformity was in matters of personal or business interest to the owners. We have, however, been concerned not merely with present practice but also with future potentialities for the regimentation of opinion...' 'Economic power', the Mahalanobis Committee Report on the Concentration of Economic Power, said, 'is also exercised through control over the mass media of communication...One must take into account the link between industry and newspapers which exists in our country to a much larger extent than is found in any of the other democratic countries of the world.'

This is very significant. Let us see how our press behaved when the particular business interests to which they wave their flags has come to be threatened. When bank nationalisation came, the voice of the big press was uniformly hoarse and hostile. Each constituent of the big press had,

Name of the Company	Other Business Interests of the owners	Total Publications (Dailies)	Combined circulation controlled
1. Express Newspapers	Tea, Chemicals, Investments, Automobiles, Cement, Sugar.	14	10,17,354
2. Hindustan Times and Allied Publications	Jute, Tea, Textiles, Synthetic fibre, Automobiles, Sugar, Aluminium, and Consumer articles.	7	2,60,758
3. Bennet Colemann & Co.	Cement, Coal, Mining, Paper & Investments.	8	4,70,157
4. The Statesman Ltd.	Investments, Steel, Heavy Engineering, Textiles, Coal, Mining, Paper & Chemicals.	2	1,69,156

Monopoly Enquiring Commission's Report and Press in India, 1969.

6. 'India 1970'.

7. Press Commission's Report 1954.



then apparently, its own interest in a particular bank. Tatas of the *Statesman* with the Central Bank of India, Dalmia-Jains of the *Times of India* with the Allahabad Bank, Birlas of the *Hindustan Times* with the United Commercial Bank. The Goenkas being the owners of a fleet of 52 companies were to be the most affected by bank nationalisation. So, the *Indian Express* promptly led the vehement 'jihad' that went on. The above table gives an idea of what interests these newspaper owners represent.<sup>8</sup>

**I**t is too naive to believe that their journalistic ethics prevents them from being subjective, when these interests represented by them are threatened. This fact was more than proved, when the PTL, controlled by these very interests, refrained from reporting the CBI-enquiry on the Sahu Jains.<sup>9</sup>

The fly in the soup is glaringly evident when the big press tries to hit out at the government in the Press Finance Corporation issue. It knows, in the present set up, the medium and small newspapers are at its mercy. Whenever it wants them to be extinct, with a flick of the fingers, it can do so. The *Indian Express* group entered the market of the Kannada Press with a bang through *Kannada Prabha*. The fierce sales techniques, the ruthless cornering of the market and the reckless campaign they launched for that made at least one newspaper in Kannada—*Tainadu*, which had a service record of many decades, fold up. If it wants, the big press can repeat this performance anywhere. The Press Finance Corporation being an insurance for the small and medium newspapers, against economic strangulation, the big press would surely oppose it tooth and nail.

Over and above all this, the ominous portents suspected by the Press Commission are coming

dangerously nearer. The monopoly of ideas and concentration of thought in the big press is becoming too suffocating to allow any breathing air left. The metropolitan dailies belonging to common ownership units enjoyed 80.8 per cent of the total circulation of the metropolitan daily press during 1969 as well as 1968.<sup>10</sup> As we discussed earlier, the whole readership of the Indian press stays in the cities, especially the metropolitan cities. The intellectual class which forms the hard core of the opinion-leadership is, in this way, held captive by the big press, as it does not provide an all-sided frank discussion on the issues concerning society.

As S. Natarajan observed,<sup>11</sup> 'one of the weaknesses of Indian journalism is the failure to develop free-lance journalism. That there is scope can be seen from a perusal of the press and the new ground which is being broken by several writers. Most of these, however, are written by the members of the staff or by persons connected with the staff.'

**S**ill, Frank Moraes tries to make us believe that 'The fact is that there is fierce competition among the so-called monopoly dailies'.<sup>12</sup> One knows this too well. But the danger to which one must be aware is what these dailies as a class represent—and the regimentation of thought that they are trying to thrust into the social and political milieu of this country. This, the monopoly of ideas and thought-content, is to be dreaded more now than any other shade of monopoly.

The ways to improve the quality and status of the Indian press are blocked by the press itself. That cherished freedom of expression is imprisoned by none other than the press. Freedom divorced from reality is self-destructive. The Indian press—the lost estate—needs a thorough over-hauling and a deep soul-searching.

8. Monopoly Inquiry Commission's Report and Press in India, 1969.

9. Speech by C.N. Chittaranjan.

10. Press in India, 1970.

11. Democracy and Press, Natarajan.

12. Freedom of the Press in India: edited by A.G. Noorani.

# Freeing the free

PRAN CHOPRA

AFTER\* years of conniving with the big business baron to help him capture the Indian press, the government is also going to take a bite at the cherry. It has put forward proposals for ending the control of leading newspapers by the top industrial and commercial houses. This is very welcome. Whether these owners prostitute this part of their property or not, using it to serve their other interests, they damage its most priceless virtue: its credibility with the reader. But the government would be doing exactly the same if its proposals went through unamended. This would be progress from the frying pan to the fire. To whom will the press turn for pro-

tection if the government develops the same inclination which is suspected in the present keepers of the Press?

If this fate actually befalls the press, the responsibility will mostly lie upon those who have most vehemently opposed the present proposals. Towards a reform which in its essentials was long overdue, they have adopted an attitude which is wholly negative. This has had two consequences already: support for the proposals comes only from those people now who would make them even stiffer and in the process make them even less practicable in certain respects than they are already; and the choice has been reduced to only two alternatives, either the press as it is or the pro-

\*Reprinted from the 'Economic and Political Weekly' September 23, 1971.

posals as they are. The situation is tailor-made for the proposals, which means the government can happily begin to carve a niche for itself in the board rooms of all the more influential newspapers.

If these proposals or something more drastic is finally adopted by the country, it will not be because slogans make policies and sense does not, but because no sensible man can look upon press ownership as it is and honestly say that nothing needs to be done about it. Therefore, if the only scheme in the field for doing anything is the one sponsored by government, then this is what will carry the day. That is what makes it tragic that those who ought to know better are either silent or noisily resolute not to see the facts. There are a number of operational and even conceptual drawbacks in the government's scheme. But then, someone should bring forward a better set, not turn an angry back upon the effort altogether and stump into a future which may well be worse.

**T**he present is bad enough. I do not wish to overload the argument with statistics. The salient ones will do; they clearly flag the present and foreseeable dangers. Ten leading common ownership units, that is each owning more than one newspaper, controlled 48.2 per cent of the daily circulation in 1967 against 39.3 per cent in 1960.<sup>1</sup> Daily newspapers owned by all the (65) common ownership units (not to use the slightly pejorative word, 'chains') together accounted for only 21 per cent of the number of newspapers but over 74 per cent of the daily circulation. Since 1963 their share had risen by over 34 per cent.

Ninety-five per cent of the circulation of the daily newspapers

in the four metropolitan cities was accounted for by the common ownership units in 1967. Among them the units which had most of this circulation—the exceptions are few but some among them are very honourable ones—were owned by people or corporations whose primary occupation and interest were not newspaper publication but some other industry, and most of them in turn, 80 per cent on a rough computation, were what the Monopolies Commission classifies as the top business houses.

**O**ther figures show who controls the commanding heights over here. Because of the larger number of pages which the bigger newspapers can afford and the smaller cannot, their share of the total newsprint allocation and specially of the imported variety is twice as high as their share of the circulation. Their share of the advertisement revenue is higher still, and not only because with higher circulation they can charge higher rates but also because a much higher proportion of their space is taken up with advertisements.

In fact, newspapers, with safe circulation leads, occasionally cut back on the number of copies printed (unless they can find printing paper outside the quotas allotted by the government under the rationed distribution of newsprint, which is scarce) to bring out extra large 'supplement' issues which are a favourite money earner; the ratio of advertisement space is even higher in them than in the normal daily issue which itself is above 50 per cent in 9 of the top 16 dailies and above 60 per cent in five. That means that while facilities are demanded, especially foreign exchange for the import of newsprint, in the name of freedom of the press and the value of mass communication, a disproportionate amount thereof is spent upon increasing revenues, some of which would otherwise go at least to those among the medium newspapers which circulate where the new agricultural consumer is.

I doubt that the self-interest of the advertiser sufficiently operates

as a corrective to this because the highest advertisement revenues stand to the credit of those newspapers, mostly which are owned by the top industrial houses, that is owned by those who are also by far the biggest purchasers of advertisement space in the press. Add to this the fact that many of those who are industrialists plus advertisers plus newspaper owners have also increasingly begun to own or have an interest in advertising agencies, and you have a beautiful example of the circular motion of money: from the industrialist to the advertising agency to the newspaper to the newspaper owner, that is the industrialist.

Up to a point, concentration of resources and circulation in the hands of a few newspapers is justified by the resulting improvement in both the technical and, what one may call, social quality of the press. But beyond that point it is not. To begin with, the battle is always between those with financial resources and those with only journalistic quality and values to help them; this is always an unequal battle in favour of the former because if the resources are weak, the time for mortality comes much faster than fame where the clientele is so vastly spread out.

Only in the next phase is the battle between comparable resources. Then, if the point of view does not distinguish one paper from another, as increasingly in India when the ownership of competing newspapers is in the hands of the same sort of people, the competition is only in entertainment value, the cheapest forms of sensationalism and popular appeal which have become the bane of the mass circulation press in other countries. This has not happened in India yet because that point has not been reached in the circulation war. Once it is, it will. In the meantime, and because of Indian conditions, concentration is attacking quality on three other fronts.

**F**irst, like the industrial houses which increasingly own it, the press is becoming more and more

1. Almost throughout I have used the figures for 1967, not 1968. On account of a spate of strikes late in 1967 and early 1968, which mainly the major newspapers the 1968 returns are contrary to the well-established previous trend and are unrepresentative. No further fall of any significance is shown in the more recent figures; in fact may have resumed the previous trend.

city oriented, more and more distant from its primary function, which is to be the voice and conscience of the whole community, not only of (hopefully) the urban middle class readership and the urban rich ownership. Nearly half of all the newspapers are published in the 12 biggest cities, and 12 of the 16 which have circulations of more than 1,00,000 are published from the four metropolises. Our press as a national social institution would be much stronger on the whole, if, even at the expense of the technical quality now provided by the top newspapers, we had a hundred newspapers spread all over the country, each with a circulation of, say, a hundred thousand copies, than if all the ten million circulation were shared only by ten newspapers, all of them of excellent technical quality and all of them concentrated in the four metropolitan cities.

These figures, of course, are a breakdown of a total daily circulation which is only a fraction of what it should be; but the argument would apply more, not less, if the base figure were ten times larger and could be spread over a thousand viable newspapers instead of only over fifty affluent ones in half a dozen cities, all of them owned—as is nearly the case already—by business magnates who are wholly innocent of the qualities which make the true publisher, the man for whom the newspaper he owns is his main interest and not a decoy for his other interests.

**T**he second front on which quality is losing to concentration—I mean the quality of the press as a social institution, not as a show piece of good printing—is where the government as the political manipulator meets the industrial tycoon as the amateur politician. That is where the nexus between the press and the leaders of business, and between them and the politician works to perfection. Our system is tailor-made for a particularly unhealthy kind of circular causation. The press is free to criticise, the government is sensi-

tive to criticism, the press baron is sensitive to the government's industrial policy, in which free enterprise and regulation are two phases of the same game.

**I**f the government's only aim in bringing forward these proposals had been to gain control of the press for its own purposes, then I would have simply described them as redundant. Government can gain this control—and this is the worst aspect of the present pattern of press ownership in India, so glaringly contrary to its independence that one is surprised to see it being defended in the name of the freedom of the press—more easily by playing the industrialist owners of the press either with favours or with the fear of its enormous and flexible regulatory powers. The scope for both tactics is inexhaustible. Fortunately, so far it has been used mostly for raising funds for the Congress, and from this point of view it is just as well that government thinks newspaper policies do not matter. Proprietors think they do, and so we find that while newspapers criticise the government very freely, their owners are rarely touched with the rod of editorial admonishment on the only kind of issues which matter to them.

In answer to this I have lately heard an argument of dazzling cynicism—that the smaller newspapers bend the knee to the politician more shamelessly and more regularly than the newspapers owned by the big business magnates. But this is bound to happen with things as they are, and will happen even more as time passes unless it passes well for the small newspaper. If newspaper revenues, flow in the closed circuit described above, then all those who are outside it are bound to run into extreme deprivation and either face extinction or survive by grovelling before anyone who will give them sustenance.

The smaller press is no better endowed with men of courage than the big press is, and being without an assured future, such courage as it has runs out rather

quicker. Perhaps, it would not if the bigger newspapers set a better example than they do of being fearless of pressure from any quarter, including the owner. But even then one can think of more tenacious fights by some medium newspapers than by those at the very top. One of them buckled in very quickly under pressure applied by the local governor, another made a rather quick change of policy after the last election; the editor of a third took shelter with the government when the proprietor showed his displeasure.

I cannot imagine that fear of the proprietor had nothing to do with the rather startling fact that when the 'free enterprise' business magnates owning a leading newspaper, acting in a fit of frustration and personal venom, threw out of the window an eminent arrangement for ensuring editorial freedom against the owners' displeasure, not a single major newspaper in the country found the topic to be worthy of notice; it was the world's press which reacted, not the Indian.

**S**ome critics of the Indian press sometimes describe it as a monopoly press. They are factually wrong, and they make a tactical blunder in using this term. There is free enough competition between many of the rival groups of newspapers; they do not gang up against a newcomer any more than against each other; control over resources is not acquired by them by means more corrupt than are customary with their compatriots in other industries, such as fudging accounts. It is true that since everything turns on sales figures (circulation) and it is impossible for audit to check actual circulation, the fudging expert is at a special advantage in this industry. But, all newspapers are at an equal advantage in this, whoever may own them and regardless of whether they are independent or 'chained'. Hence it is a factual error to say that the press is already a monopoly.

The tactical error is that such a charge immediately attracts the

reply that if this is the suspicion, government should first establish the facts and, if they warrant the next step, apply the Restrictive Practices Act instead of launching on the elaborate adventure of the contemplated legislation. The known facts do not suggest that remedy lies in the R.P. Act. Purely at the level of industrial practices, you will only discover that the race is being won by those who have the resources to offer quality on the requisite scale and stamina to outlast the financial losses. The word monopoly is a red herring; it is best avoided.

But, that does not mean that the situation is best allowed to rip along the line of its logic. If it is, we will travel even faster than in the past few years towards a still greater concentration of circulation in the hands of a still smaller number of newspaper owners, and a still higher concentration of industrial and commercial power among them. Remedy will then be far more tenaciously resisted, and to be successful it will have to be far more drastic. India's own experience as well as that of other countries suggests that we will then have a situation which is truly monopolistic. Between 1963 when concentration of ownership was already serious enough, and 1968, the number of new newspapers and journals rose three times faster than the circulation. But most of those which had survived by the end of 1970 were the new members of common ownership families; the share of circulation of the industrially owned among them was higher than of those owned by professional publishers. The dynamics of concentration is therefore flawless, and it will gather further momentum as, with improvements in printing technology, plants are replaced and agglomerated finance acquires still greater advantage.

The British press has left interesting footprints for us on the road to extinction followed by fine newspapers which, for all their professional excellence, could not keep up with the demands of finance and scale. Through the

elimination of rivals, including some which died proclaiming circulations of several hundred thousand each, three leading common ownership units raised their share of the daily week-day circulation from 45 per cent in 1949 to 60 per cent in 1961 and of the Sunday circulation from 61 per cent in 1949 to 84 per cent in 1961. Anything these figures leave to the imagination was fully spelt out by the London Times in its evidence before the second British Press Commission in 1962. In a moment of premonition about its own demise as an independent paper in 1967, the Times said 'To crystallise the matter at its extreme, if one man came to own all the newspapers in the United Kingdom and conditions were such that no one could successfully establish a rival newspaper, then the nation would be in danger.'

Anticipating by a decade an argument lately heard in India, that conditions of concentration in this country are not so serious yet as to warrant anything like what the government proposes to do, the British Press Commission, Hartley Shawcross presiding, said in a reference to the Times testimony 'It is possible to take the sanguine view that such results would never arise. It is not, however, prudent to wait till they do arise before taking any action. The conclusion which we have reached, although with some reluctance, is that the potential dangers of deliberately continued concentration of ownership cannot be dismissed and that some means should be sought to protect the order against them.' Well may the Commission have uttered this warning: since the previous Press Commission had reported twelve years earlier, one national daily, four national Sunday papers, one provincial Sunday paper, one London evening paper, 12 provincial daily papers, 33 provincial weeklies and 40 national magazines had disappeared.

Across the Atlantic the position is worse. In the year of the latest available figures, 1968, there was no local competition between daily newspapers in 97 per cent of the

country's 1500 cities. Fifty years ago the figure was 57 per cent. There were only 45 competing daily newspapers in 1968 against 288 in 1930, 159 chains and groups against 55 and they owned 828 papers against 311 in 1930. And even then, 159 common ownership groups accounted for only 46 per cent of the total daily circulation in the U.S.A. in 1968. In India 65 groups account for 74 per cent. Riding only the chariot of 'free enterprise', the 'free' press is travelling towards its nemesis much faster in India than it did in the U.S.A., and it will be over the brink not too far hence unless something is done about it now.

It matters very little to the reader whether his choice is whittled down by take-overs and mergers, as in Britain and the U.S.A., or by the environment being what the Times feared it would become in Britain and as it has very nearly become in India, that 'no one can successfully establish a rival newspaper'. In that statement lies both the justification and inadequacy of the present proposals of the government.

Classifying rather broadly, the state of the press places six tasks before public authority:

1. to de-link ownership of newspapers from corporations whose primary financial stake and professional interest are not publishing newspapers but other areas of business and commerce.
2. to diffuse the ownership of newspapers which are of a size above a certain ceiling, howsoever they may be owned, so that their share-holding is more widebased.
3. to reduce the concentration of ownership of circulation by ensuring that more of the new circulation at least, and if possible the present circulation also, is shared by a larger number of newspapers.
4. to promote dispersal of the centres of newspaper publi-

cation throughout the country, so that the contact between the Press and the community is more varied and extensive.

5. to make the employees of newspapers closer partners in running them.
6. to ensure the independence of the editor against day to day interference by the proprietor, which in Indian conditions is a task of as high a priority as any listed above.

**T**he government's proposals address themselves to the first two and the fifth objectives, and not at all to the third, fourth and sixth. For this reason one must call them very inadequate. Even in tackling what it aims to, the bill makes provisions which are complicated and cumbersome, open to misuse and evasion, and not all their drawbacks in these respects are capable of remedy within the present scheme. Remedy for them lies in an entirely new strategy.

The bill would effectively limit the aggregate participation of all corporation finance in the equity of a newspaper to a maximum of 20 per cent, that of interconnected corporations to 10 per cent and of a single corporation to five per cent. This is excellent. But there are several defects and, as remedies are suggested, the faults of the present strategy will become more clear.

First, the bill applies not only to mainly non-publishing corporations owning newspapers. That it should; but it equally applies to mainly publishing corporations, and the wisdom of that is open to question. After providing against the former pretending to be the latter, corporations whose business and interests are devoted entirely to newspaper publishing and allied activities should either be exempted or brought in only when they cross a much higher than the prescribed ceiling. Since the purpose of the entire bill, and of this provision in particular, is to cut the nexus between the leading newspapers and centres of industrial

and commercial power, a distinction should be made between newspapers which are afflicted by the nexus and those which are not.

**S**econd, there are no convincing safeguards against the shares required to be off-loaded by the corporate sector being picked up by it under different disguises. Newspaper employees themselves may be used for this purpose; being employees of a company in which the largest block of shares would still be held by the corporate sector, they would not be as far beyond manipulation by the real purchaser as one would want. Employees of other companies of the corporations may also prove to be handy. Or, the apparent purchaser may be only the Trojan horse of other interests whose entry into newspapers claiming to be free and independent is best avoided. For example, political parties or employees of unions which are affiliated to parties.

Means should be found for encouraging the desirable kind of purchaser and discouraging the undesirable. Two companion provisions may be worth considering: each purchaser should be required to satisfy designated authority that the purchase money is his own, and monetary assistance be provided for those who are considered worth encouraging. One way may be to enable whole categories of staff, or even sub-categories, to buy shares against a cut in salary or provident fund, the shares being held until the money is paid, by the public trustee (or trustees, if representing different categories) who should in such cases, be represented by nominees of the concerned staff.

Thirdly, it is very likely that all the shares will not be diffused in this way, and a substantial portion will go into the hands of the public trustee, a government nominee. This is a dangerous possibility and must be neutralised at once—for example, by laying down that the public trustee shall not participate in any discussion or voting on matters of editorial policy, un-

less by the methods suggested earlier, the need for appointing a public trustee is eliminated altogether. Alternatively only people of eminence in public life and independent of the Government as well as commercial and industrial complexes, people of the kind suggested as trustees for a larger purpose in a later paragraph, should be appointed as trustees for this limited purpose as well.

Under Section 424H, the bill does a much better job of keeping the officialdom of non-publishing corporations out of the newspaper business. This is a swift and unambiguous provision. The way companies function is often determined much more by the nature of the management than by the nature of the shareholding community; hence the importance of this provision. But it needs to be extended. At present it only debars directors, managing directors and managers of non-publishing companies from holding such positions in a newspaper company; it should also debar other employees of the former. Similarly, such officials of one publishing company should also be debarred from holding such positions in another publishing company, to reduce chances of: (a) inter-locking of publishing companies, which can also lead to unwelcome concentrations of circulation and (b) an existing newspaper publishing company escaping the Act by breaking itself up nominally into companies of a size which is below the threshold of the Act.

**A**s in respect of its main purpose, in respect of one of the lesser ones—workers' participation in management—the bill picks up a good idea and then twists it into an impractical shape, making one wonder whether it is *intended* that the scheme should not get off the ground. As an industrial plant or as a management problem, a newspaper factory is no different from another. It is only as a member of the press that it has a distinct place in a democratic society. Therefore, it is only in its journalistic aspect that the newspaper

industry qualifies for special treatment, not as an industrial plant. Why, then, should an accountant or mechanic or lorry driver in a newspaper be treated differently from those in a steel mill for giving them representation on the board of directors? Their claim for it is no less than, but also not more than, that of comparable employees in other industries, and should progress, as it should, alongside theirs.

In the meantime, there can be a case, and a good one it is, for bringing journalist members of the staff into association with the management of the newspaper—as a newspaper, not as an industrial plant. Therefore, a double distinction has to be kept in view: between the journalist and non-journalist members of the staff, and between the journalistic and non-journalistic functions of a newspaper establishment.

**T**he bill not only ignores both these distinctions but gives to the staff half the seats on the board of directors without their acquiring any shareholding. This is a novel proposition, to say the least. If half the directors of a company have no financial stake in it beyond that of their jobs—which is not to be underestimated of course—then all kinds of short-sighted decisions may be confidently expected, for example on staff salaries. Therefore, either these provisions should be substantially scaled down, keeping in view the distinctions mentioned above, or it should be provided that in any newspaper to which these provisions apply unaltered, wages would be directly related to profits. Otherwise, the result may be that, like those who would have been tenants instead but became landless labour, newspaper employees will only be engaged as daily wage staff.

Much healthier in this respect is the provision that the bill will not apply at all to a newspaper published by a cooperative society of which not less than 51 per cent members are working journalists or other employees of the society. Here also there may be a problem

of impersonation. India's experience of cooperatives is rather full of such examples, and various kinds of dodges will be easy to apply if only a small and tightly held cooperative society is formed to own and operate a big newspaper; one cannot see any safeguards in the bill against even the existing newspapers being put on that footing. A small body of 'dependable' staff can be safely found which will qualify the society under the 51 per cent provision. But, if means can be found for plugging these loopholes, and if financial institutions exist which will prime their pump for such cooperative societies, this provision is healthy encouragement for the right pattern of newspaper ownership. Economies of scale have a part to play so long as they do not get out of hand, and the bill rightly allows for them in the case of newspapers with a cooperative or diffused ownership.

But, the bill errs on the side of making only a negative approach to what is in all circumstances a desirable objective and will become increasingly desirable when newspapers have no additional readership to cater for and start to snatch readers from other newspapers. While correct in not placing a restriction on the rise in circulation of leading circulation papers provided their ownership schemes conform, the bill should even now encourage those newspapers, by discriminating in their favour, which do not form part of chains and groups and are not published from the existing main centres of newspaper publication. To some extent, further concentration of circulation in a few hands and a few areas will be discouraged when the play of the powerful concentrates of urban-oriented industrial high finance is reduced in the newspaper industry and the terms of competition made less unfair. But it is not too soon to start giving positive encouragement to newspapers which can even now make a contribution to the diffusion of circulation.

**T**he greatest lacuna in the bill, so glaring that one cannot assume

the omission is accidental, is this: No matter who the owner may be, it is one of the most essential requirements of a genuinely free press that the owner should not interfere with the day to day responsibilities of the editor. But the bill is silent on this. If a proprietor desires such a close degree of control on his paper, he should appoint himself as the editor and not use another's shoulder for firing his ideological guns. The proprietor is fully entitled to lay down the broad policy mandate; he should be completely free to declare in it that he stands for the abolition of the Directive Principles of the Constitution or of all land legislation. But, in fairness to the reading public, the mandate should be laid down in a public document. Once the editor accepts it, he should be left free to work within its ambit, and the judgment whether he is faithful to it or not should neither rest with the editor nor the owner but with an agreed and declared third party of credible independence.

This was the essence of the scheme of editorial independence which the present owners of *The Statesman* accepted when the newspaper changed hands and, subsequently, in an enormously irresponsible and arrogant act, abolished overnight in a manner humiliating to the third party, the Trustees who were men of far greater public standing than any of the proprietors. The full story of that act has yet to be told, but there is no reason to fear that its repetition cannot be prevented.

**I**t may be impracticable to find suitable trustees for all the newspapers, but the difficulty is not insurmountable. A beginning can be made with half a dozen of the leading newspapers; they can set such an honourable example that it is bound to have a healthy effect upon all the rest. Or a common authority of the requisite standing can be set up for groups of newspapers or all of them. It can either be made obligatory for newspapers to accept such a scheme or they can be given the incentive of

selective relaxation of other provisions of the bill. But, it is important to realise that day to day proprietorial interference with the editorial mandate can be as bad in the case of a newspaper with one of ownership as with another kind. I would possibly exempt only party newspapers but would prefer not to.

**T**he main source of the shortcomings of the present proposals is that they rely exclusively on the law and not at all on incentive. And that, too, they do by extending to such a varied and flexible industry as newspaper publishing the complicated provisions of India's most cumbersome piece of legislation, the Companies Act. Law should be used only as a supplementary power, to do what cannot be done otherwise; then, in combination with other measures, it can be twice as effective. If it seeks to do too much or many different kinds of things it becomes ineffective. That can be the fate of the intended legislation. In order to plug all conceivable loopholes it can make itself hopelessly complex.

As it is, it has several more or less duplicating provisions, all trying to achieve broadly the same thing by different means because none of them is good enough by itself. And yet it leaves uncovered not only the loopholes and inadequacies mentioned already but a hole big enough for a Rolls Royce to go through: that a newspaper may escape the provisions of this bill altogether by converting itself into an individual ownership; or into several different editions, each below 15,000 copies but each claiming to be a separate newspaper sharing services with all the others. The fate of such laws is best reflected in what happened in the U.S.A. a couple of years ago: anti-cartel and anti-monopoly laws were found to have been so extensively violated that a law had to be passed to regularise the violations. The former laws disappeared over extensive areas of their jurisdiction.

The aims of the law for the present purpose should only be

(a) to curtail the power of non-publishing finance in the newspaper industry by liquidating the nexus with the high finance of business; (b) to discourage concentration of the ownership of circulation by providing for more fair competition and greater dispersal, and (c) to ensure a reasonable degree of editorial independence. This it can do by using only two of the proposed provisions, those relating to corporate finance and managerial personnel, and supplementing them with: (a) either a price—page schedule or a steeply slabbed tax on all advertisement revenue above the level needed for comfortable viability at a circulation of, say, 100,000 (to be revised upward as total readership grows); (b) a requirement that newspapers must provide the suggested safeguards for editorial independence and (c) the power to treat each newspaper in a group as a separate entity for financial purposes but the groups as a whole as a single entity for the allocation of newsprint, the former to prevent the profits of a successful unit being used to subsidise new additional units, the latter to provide a more direct curb on the growth of chains and groups by slabbing down the allocation according to the total circulation of the group.

**B**eyond that, the government should only use, and needs to use only, incentives which are best applied through a newspaper finance corporation and disincentives which it has the power to apply so long as newsprint has to be rationed. As it is, the slabbed system of newsprint allocations has begun to have some impact: the dip in the statistics of the bigger newspapers between 1967 and 1968 has not been wholly made up though it largely has been. Further refined, and aided by the suggested supplementary legislation, these tools can bring about all the desired changes. More slowly but with much greater stability, reforming the press is more vital than sending it into financial or professional doldrums.



# Books

**RESPONSIBILITY IN MASS MEDIA** By Wilbur Schramm Harper & Bros; New York.

**THE MASS MEDIA IN MODERN SOCIETY** By Theodore Peterson, Jay W. Jensen, William L. Rivers; Holt, Rinehart & Winston INC; New York.

Wilbur Schramm's depth survey traces the development of mass communication from the hoary days of the handwritten newsletter to the present large newspapers with their sophisticated equipment and vast circulations and the network of motion-pictures, the TV and radio stations. This study is a part of the author's more comprehensive and well-researched work on the waning influence of Christian ethics on the socio-economic life as it has shaped under the stress of technological advance. The phenomenal growth of mass media has thrown up new problems and the author stands for a re-defining of their standards, rights and responsibilities. Gone is the age when man did not live by bread alone and journalism—as for the pioneers—was a selfless mission in the service of one noble cause or another.

Journalism now is a profession within an industry. Schramm sees the press and other media in the form of a school-cum-department store to inform and educate, project different views and news, put up a variety of entertainment programmes to cater to the diverse tastes of a large number of consumers and, in the process, make reasonable profits, as any business undertaking would, to build up economic viability. But he would not have media's informational function subordinated to profit-making and cites cases of indifferent performance under commercial pressures. He pins responsibility for maintaining high standards on the media themselves, on the public and, in the last resort, on the government as the 'residual legatee'.

The public should organise some kind of control to ensure truth, objectivity, representative coverage and healthy entertainment. The government may step in if the media keep on erring and the public is either apathetic or ineffective in stemming the rot. Otherwise, he ardently advocates the 'hands-off-media' thesis in keeping with the U.S. Bill of Rights which guarantees freedom of the press. 'If we want government to have as little as possible to do with mass communication', he says, 'the best way to prevent it is for our media to give as responsible a performance as they possibly can and the public to be alert to

media performance and vocal in expressing its needs and judgments.' Here, it is well known that the media customers are even less organised than the buyers in the commercial market. So, if they choose to stay in that State, they will have the media they deserve. But, in view of the mass impact of media on public standards, the government cannot long remain indifferent and may, in the circumstances, intervene to make up for the public's apathy.

Peterson, Jensen and Rivers have collaborated to present an analysis of the economics and ethics of mass media and their expanding role under the impact of vast urbanization following the industrial revolutions from the 17th century onwards when the winds of change gradually blew away some of the old norms and their suffocating hold on the avenues of free expression. They make a detailed reference to the scene in the USA. The authors have examined four concepts—authoritarianism, the Soviet System (they see little difference between the two in the net result of curbs on independent opinions), libertarianism and the social responsibilities theory. The accent in these books is on the last theme as the base for harmonising the freedom of mass media and their obligations to society. The findings should help resolve the current controversy.

In the authoritarian order, there was no freedom of the press. The monarch was the supreme head of all institutions. Individual rights did not exist. Individuals and institutions were expected to contribute to the grandeur of the Crown. Printing was licensed and nothing could appear before being censored. Oppressive stamp duty, taxes on paper and advertising, censorship, stringent libel laws, arbitrary and crippling punishment and fines discouraged publishing. Officials had dictatorial powers to deal with the 'offenders'. The Mother of Parliament was equally averse to being reported. Many had to face the pillory, long terms of imprisonment and, in some cases, even death for defying these restrictions. All the same, intellectuals came forward to fight these inhibitions. Milton's strong plea for 'unlicensed printing' voiced in his *Areopagitica* was supported by Locke, the battle being reinforced by John Wilkes and Crosby, Members of Parliament, who had to undergo imprisonment. Thanks to these irrepressible thinkers who fought for decades, the autocratic authority of Parliament and the Crown ultimately gave way to liberal ideas.

The liberal school advocated complete freedom of the press—an idea akin to *laissez-faire* in the econo-

mic field. There had to be a free market-place of ideas; all pressures were ruled out; the press would have an unquestioned right to tell, to comment, to entertain and to make profits for financial maintenance. Critics of the theory argue that in such a state of affairs, there would be no safeguards against the abuse of freedom. The media would exercise that freedom for class aggrandisement, and for the benefit of the commercial interests controlling them. In the name of art, there would be obscenity; there could be attacks on fair reputations, and blackmail, inroads into privacy and disclosures of official secrets besides a prejudicial approach to the less articulate minority groups. Media owners, with the lure of finance, would enter the editorial rooms and make short work of journalistic ethics.

There should, therefore, be no *laissez-faire* for that media whose primary function is to promote social good. On that, there is no marked divergence of opinion. 'Without high ethical standards', says Pulitzer, 'a newspaper not only is stripped of its splendid possibilities for public service but may become a positive danger to the community'. John Stuart Mill—that great champion of civil liberties—would brook no curbs on the press so long as it functioned to bring the maximum benefit to the maximum number.

Social responsibilities demand that the media function for the general good of the masses and not as tools of big business. Truth is supreme. Coverage must be accurate. Media are 'common carriers' of news and views with an equal commitment to the majority and the minority; they must project all viewpoints including those contrary to their own. Presentation or suppression of information should be based on principles of the common weal and not on party or commercial interests. Giving an overall, representative picture, media would expand subject to their usefulness to society. Conditions would, therefore, be created to ensure that smaller papers serving inarticulate groups would not be swallowed by the giants.

In view of the growing newspaper chains and the domination of press barons, the need for ethical codes was emphasised. In 1947, the Hutchins Commission in the USA—a non-official body manned by university sociologists—examined the question of freedom of the press and ownership concentration and laid down a five-point formula urging unimpeachable standards and supervision by a neutral, voluntary agency. But self-regulation had already received attention and 'Canons of Journalism'—a new code—had been adopted by the American editors followed by the Radio Code in 1937 and the TV Code in 1952.

The two Royal Commissions in England which led to the establishment of the Press Council there in 1953 examined the prevailing standards and the

take-over of small papers by the bigger ones. Criteria were set forth for future mergers which could be permitted only to save dying papers and not to add to the profits of the giants. Regional interests served by the smaller merging papers and their independent approach would not be stifled. But the criticism was that that was better said than done. Complaints of lapses on the part of newspapers (the British Council deals with the press only) and official encroachments on their freedom have since been coming under review of the Council.

The cheque-book journalism has caused concern. Many see in the serialisation of crime stories and other scandals an undue glorification of criminals. While some people say that such coverage lays bare the loopholes in the investigation system, others hold that the press does wrong by playing up what the courts have condemned. Besides yellow journalism, party and communal papers, the consequent slants, bias, distortions, exaggerations and the hold of moneybags, the press faces the problem of drastic laws like the Prevention Detention Act, Security and Emergency Regulations, bans, proscription and censorship not only in military regimes but also in democratic countries. The legal net has been widening without built-in safeguards so that there is no protection against official abuses.

Parliamentary privileges which remain undefined have sometimes caused friction. There have been confrontations in India and, after some unsavoury skirmishes, an understanding has come about between the Legislature and Journalists in view of the pronouncements of the Supreme Court and the State High Courts. But, while the Centre takes at times a broad view of criticisms and tensions, the same cannot be said of our State Governments. Detentions, acquittals by the Courts and withdrawal of cases the moment matters go to the judiciary are pointers to the need for watching official and ministerial exuberance. Complaints can be submitted to the Press Council but its composition has been under fire, in some sections in very emphatic terms.

Equally loud is the thunder from the Treasury benches. Indira Gandhi said some time ago that 'wherever the press has not regulated itself, it has had to be regulated; that is the choice before the press in this country too.' Speaking at the 10th anniversary function of UNI in the Capital, the Prime Minister reminded the press of its commitment to the community in the light of the new trends. She complained that eighty per cent of its foreign coverage itself was slanted towards the West at the cost of developments in Asia and that the press played the role of the 'high priest' more often than that of the 'great informer'. So far as looking West is concerned, the press no doubt shares the inferiority complex of our politicians and Ministers who seek image-building abroad and not within the country.

Speaking at Gandhinagar, Raghunatha Reddy, Union Minister, assured journalists that 'the Union

Government is keen to end the monopoly grip on the press, particularly after the massive mandate from the people during the elections.' He described editors of chain papers as 'literary agents of big business owners of newspaper concerns' and promised early measures to ensure economic freedom to journalists. The IENS chief refuted these charges in his counter-statement. Mrs. Nandini Satpathy, Information and Broadcasting Minister, in her speech at Bombay in April, deplored the low standard of Indian films and advised the Directors to bring about improvement. Later at Mussoorie in May, she reiterated the 'assurance of early anti-monopoly legislation.

So far so good. But if media are to function independently, they must be free not only from the grip of big business but also from overt and manipulated pressures exercised by government through special concessions and favours to particular newspapers and journalists, and occasional threats of withdrawal of government advertisements. Broadcasting in India is a government affair altogether and persistent suggestions for putting an end to this State monopoly have had no effect. State subsidies to sick papers, it is argued, will make them mouthpieces of the government.

The controversy is on. It is all to the good. It will help round off the twisted edges. Jefferson would prefer newspapers without a government to a government without newspapers. The objective of both is the same—social good. Secular integration and egalitarian trends in our country have placed new demands on both. If they are sincerely committed to their roles—governments as the promoter of social justice and the press as the fearless watchdog—we may look ahead with confidence!

Pratap C. Dutta

**FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN INDIA**, edited by  
A. G. Noorani; Nachiketa Publications Ltd.,  
Pages 143.

Controversy—not only over the extent a democratic government can legitimately interfere with the free functioning of a free press, but also to what extent it would be justified in 'protecting' one section of the press from another or, the whole of it from an inherent 'badness'—has been exercising the minds of all concerned during the last few years. Two reasons, mainly, account for this situation.

First, the Union Government has been, from time to time, making statements in Parliament and outside concerning its thinking on the conversion of national news agencies into public trusts, the setting up of a body to help the financially weaker sections of the language press and its intention to put up an international news agency. One must admit that all these would have had a greater degree of credibility of proclaimed intentions had its own handling

of the controlled media, such as the All India Radio, been as objectively objective as it purports to be.

Secondly, what makes it even more suspect on these points is the way in which the recommendations of various committees or commissions have been accepted or disregarded in parts, depending on what suits the government and what does not. To quote one example, the Press Commission cautioned the government against entering news agencies as share holders, and, the Chanda Committee recommended a public corporation for All India Radio. Both these recommendations have been flouted as not binding. On the other hand, the Press Commission's suggestion for making public trusts of the national news agencies has been reportedly taken up for active consideration.

That is not to imply that the state of the Indian press today is ideal, or even highly satisfactory—that it is free from some generic flaws which demand betterment, that it reflects public opinion as well as it should, that it is not susceptible to certain extraneous pressures on editorial working from managerial and ownership lobbies. The vital question is: is it advisable for a government to enter the arena in a school-masterly role?

The Leslie Sawhney Programme for Training in Democracy called a seminar in May, 1970, in Srinagar, to discuss this question. Ten papers were presented by editorial, managerial and government representatives, and discussed by 25 participants. The present volume is a compendium of the papers read and the proceedings held at this seminar.

If it was the purpose of this seminar to do something beyond focusing attention on the problem, then it seems to have come to some very obvious, and rather academic, conclusions. As for instance, the 'Report on Discussions' says: 'There was unanimous agreement that without freedom of the press there could be no true democracy. In this context the seminar welcomes the acceptance of freedom of the press by the people and Government in India as total and unqualified, but expressed concern at certain recent trends which showed that this freedom cannot always be taken for granted.'

In some of the papers read, much argument seems to have been spent either in pointing an accusing finger at government, or in side-tracking the real issues. The only conclusion Frank Moraes arrives at in *Monopolies in the Press and Newspaper Chains* is that A.I.R. is a bigger monopoly than some of the newspaper chains qualified with that term. Given Moraes' experience and insight, one would have expected a deeper analysis of the professional and operational implications of monopoly in each sector.

Khushwant Singh, after giving a detailed account of his experience as editor of the *Weekly* and quoting the impressive circulation figures of the *Times of India* Group periodicals, remarks: 'Finally, in recent years there has been a mushroom of many non-commercial magazines. These are usually owned by powerful statesmen or wives of important officials

who have very little problems in securing newsprint and machinery. Thereafter they only publish special issues. Through their influence they get all the advertisements they need and print a few copies which are given to advertisers and to a few selected people.'

Likewise, even when agreeing with A. D. Gorwala's general line of argument that the press should be vigilant on all public issues (*Press as an Educative Factor*), one fails to endorse fully his example that his warning at the time of taking Krishna Menon (a 'crypto-communist') as Defence Minister, went unheeded. This is very unfirm ground, indeed—even for argument's sake!

I. K. Gujral, then the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, has been even more evasive in his paper, (*The Indian Press—Challenge and the Constitution* and S. Mulgaokar's *The Press* blemishes posed vis-a-vis the governmental role, he makes a long detour into what the communication process means and how great the influence of the mass media is in our time. The only point he commits his opinion on is that newspapers symbolise the *status quo*, and in order to contribute to social change they must have a 'free communication movement' and social responsibility. And all this, in order, not to provoke the critics, qualified as a matter of personal opinion!

The two papers which give an incisive analysis of the subject are A. G. Noorani's *Freedom of the Press and the Constitution*, and S. Mulgaokar's *The Press in Free India*. Noorani examines the constitutional position in regard to freedom of the press in the light of the subsequent Supreme Court judgements, and concludes: 'The limits of the freedom of the press in India depend largely on judicial determination. It is not a perfect remedy but it is vastly superior to leaving them at the whims of the executive or, for that matter, of the legislature. Since freedom of the press where it touches parliamentary privilege is at the legislature's mercy, it is very important that parliamentary privilege should be codified and, thus made subject to the fundamental right.'

Mulgaokar, arguing that a world news agency has lesser chances of bias than any national news agency because of its international clientele, examines the effects such governmental enterprise may have on the national networks. Besides, there are some internal contradictions in the viability of such a proposition. He says: 'It must be open to serious doubt therefore that the presence of an Indian news agency in the international field will have an impact of the desired kind in the Indian news coverage of the foreign press. For it is not what is fed by the agencies but what the newspapers consider newsworthy that will finally be printed and that governs the news selection policies of international news agencies.'

Somewhat apart from the main theme of this seminar is a paper on *Training of Professional Journalists* by Chanchal Sarkar. Sarkar, evaluating

the small developments that have taken place in this field, underlines much that remains to be done, listing half a dozen suggestions worthy of serious consideration. Even after two decades of Independence, a certain kind of a communication gap has persisted between the professional journalists and his academic counterpart—a tendency to discount each other's role and effectiveness.

On the one hand, this can partly be due to a prejudice acquired against the academics, and supported by the fact that the great galaxy of editors in the pre-Independence era had almost no formal training in the trade. On the other hand, journalism teaching in this country continues to be conducted in a most arbitrary fashion. There has been little practical orientation in the curricula. Sometimes, even diploma, degree and post-degree courses have been launched with little material difference in their syllabi.

M. K. Tiku

**THE PRESS AND SOCIETY**, Edited by George L. Bird and Frederic E. Merwin, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1955, pp. 654

**THE PRESS IN CHINA**, by Lee Wen-yi, International Studies Group, Hong Kong. pp. 14.

Science has affected human life mostly through a revolution in the mass media of communication. Man's beliefs, his views on society, economic and political institutions and almost everything are constantly shaped by what flows out day and night from the rotaries, radio and television. So much so that his dress, food and habits are all subject to a subliminal change brought about by means of continuous advertisement through these media of communication. Modern means of thought control could be used to serve individual or group interests by the agencies which control them. Also, a balanced and dedicated press could be an invaluable asset for upholding the ideals of liberty subject to common good and all round progress.

In western democracies, freedom of the press has been considered almost coextensive with the amount of political liberty enjoyed by a people. It has been assiduously guarded by creating a strong public opinion in its favour. Legal battles have been fought between the press and the government on the issue of the right to know and publicize information in the public interest and of the government to withhold information on the same ground. The publication of the Pentagon papers in the United States provides a recent example of this tussle between the political authority and newspapers. Indeed, freedom of the press has tended to become sacrosanct and any effort to impose a curb on it draws instinctive disapproval from the press magnates, the reporting community and their readers. The two books under scrutiny are related to two societies which are dia-

metrically opposite to each other in every respect and thus the role of the press in these countries is also qualitatively different.

The first book, *The Press and Society* is, as also suggested by its sub-title, a collection of famous essays skilfully arranged and abridged by the editors for the benefit of the students of journalism in the United States. Divided into three sections, the book covers the concepts of public opinion, propaganda and freedom of the press; various internal factors which contribute in the working of the press; and the outside influences—organized and unorganized—which operate on the press. It contains essays of historical import to the field of western journalism such as those of Wilhelm Bauer, James Bryce, Walter Lippman, George Gallup, Harold D. Lasswell, etc. Excerpts from the report of the Commission on the Freedom of the Press, popularly known as the Hutchins Report after its chairman, and its recommendations are included in the third chapter.

The right to information is a moral right and the freedom to squeal when hurt are the two principles which run through the entire volume. The moral right of free expression is qualified by one's duty towards the common good and it does not include the right to lie as a deliberate instrument of policy. Editors have tried to give the students both the conceptual and practical ramifications of the problems faced by the press in the United States.

The other book—though consisting of only fourteen pages, Lee Wen-yi's *The Press in China*, can be called a small book in itself by virtue of the treatment given by the author to the development of the press in China from the ancient to the modern post-revolution period—is loaded with the author's revulsion towards the communist regime of the Chinese mainland. She has tried to prove that the role played by the Chinese mainland press has radically changed after the Communist take-over because of the deliberate policy of its government.

The author is right to suggest that the role of the press is viewed differently under the communistic scheme of things. True, the press becomes an active instrument of government policy for mobilising public opinion around national objectives. It is hardly allowed to serve the interests of the pressure groups as is the case in non-communist countries. Many of the attributes of a free press which we are so accustomed to are conspicuous by their absence. The whole media of communication are directed to engineer mass participation and are constantly used to persuade teeming millions to subject their acquisitive instincts to the common good. Thus, propaganda plays a key role in the working of Communist governments. The author's revulsion to communism is clear by her following remarks on revolutions in Russia and China. 'Both were preceded by years of clandestine operations which required that the conspirators also be propagandists'.

In China, foreign correspondents felt extremely ill at ease because they did not enjoy the same

freedom as they did in other countries. The curb on their movement was resented and the author has quoted a number of foreign correspondents to highlight their life in China and the hardships they had to undergo while doing their job. The Chinese Government's policy of interpering with the free flow of news to and from China and their attempt to keep their people ignorant about the outside world by curbing foreign travel and restricting the entry of visitors is emphasised. But lately the situation has shown signs of change in the policy of the Chinese Government. China seems to be opening up. The most hated Government and pronounced enemy number one till the sixties has now been invited for negotiations and a host of American nationals from different walks of life have had an opportunity to see for themselves the fruits of a rigorous discipline.

Even the correspondents which the author has quoted to highlight the miseries of Chinese life seem to be fast adjusting their views about China. Robert Guillin of France's *Le Monde* now reports in the following vein: 'For when everything has been said on the differences between the Chinese system of political and economic development and that of the West, what sets China apart even more is perhaps what one could call its system of moral development. Not only does China require the new society to be highly moral and virtuous—objectives which are entirely praiseworthy—but the way it proposes to reach these goals is completely at variance with methods employed in the West.' '...However, it must be recognised that China's positive achievements out-weigh its negative aspects.' In this post-cultural revolution period, the China which I discovered, or rather rediscovered, is open to the outside world, a China marked by success and lowered tensions. A China open to the outside world represents a country which is once again voicing its views on peaceful co-existence and trying to renew its links with other nations' (Reproduced in *Times of India*, October 9, 1971).

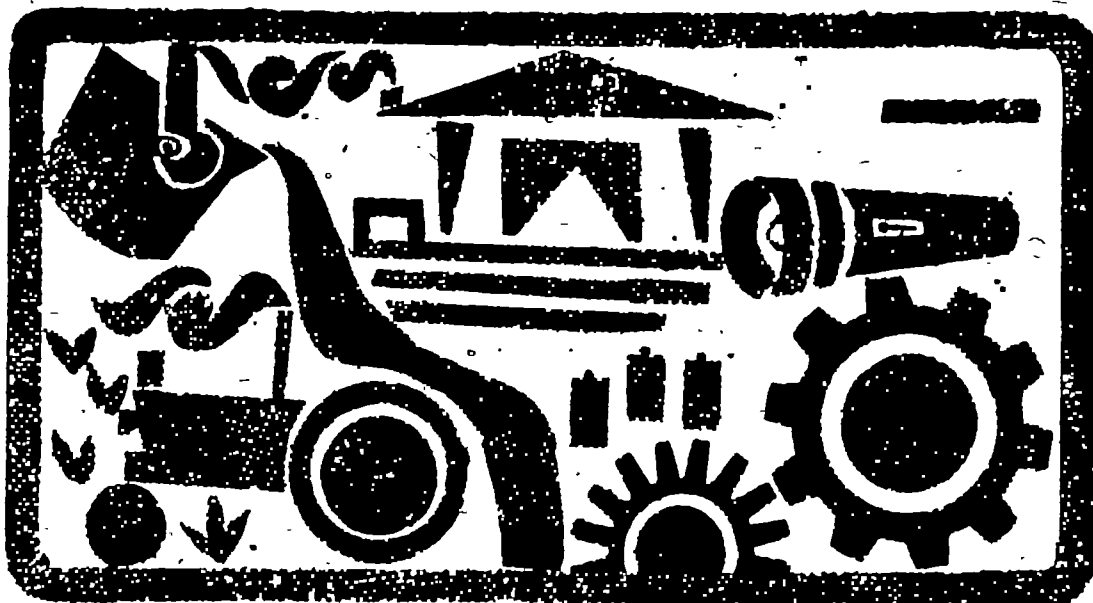
For obvious reasons, pen-pushers in the colonies right outside China and neighbouring countries would take some time to adjust their views and devise a suitable strategy to meet the new Chinese image. It could also be concluded that the role of the press might be considerably influenced by what a society tries to accomplish.

D. C. Sharma

#### CORRECTION

Inadvertently, the Andamans and Nicobars were lumped together in Romesh Thapar's article (SEMINAR 146) with a number of foreign territories. What was sought to be stressed was the totality of the region and its varied problems.

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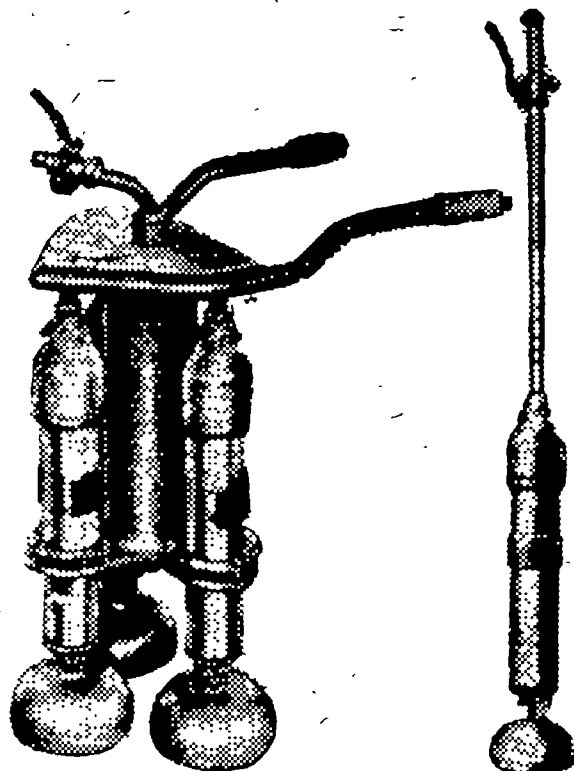
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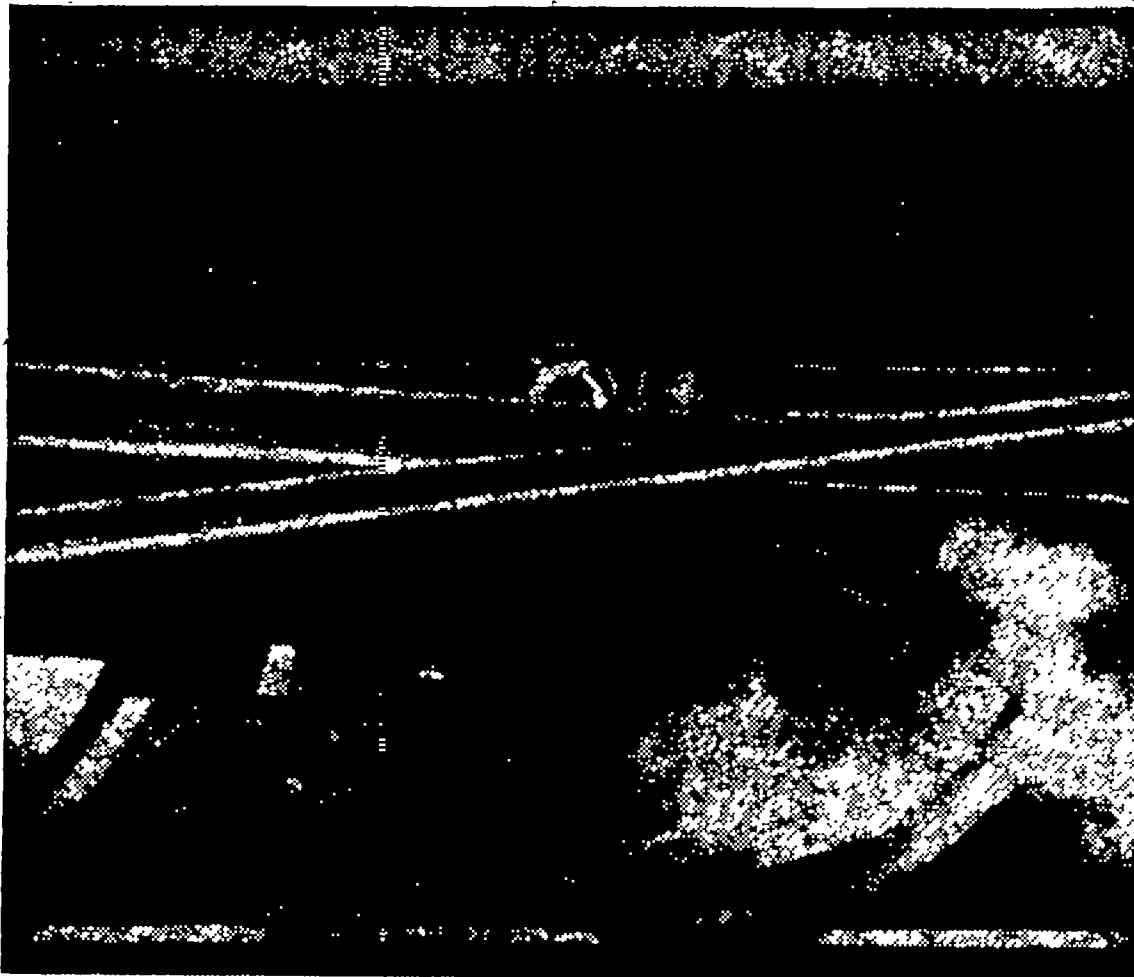
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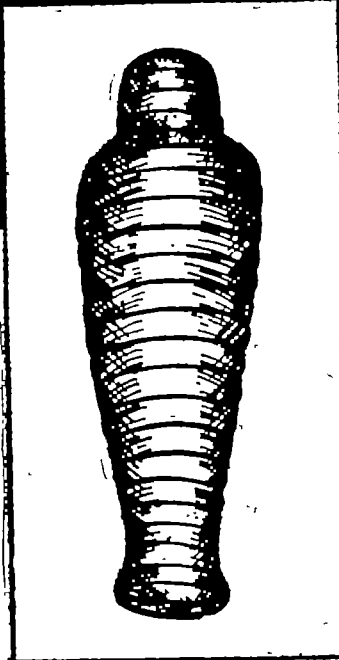
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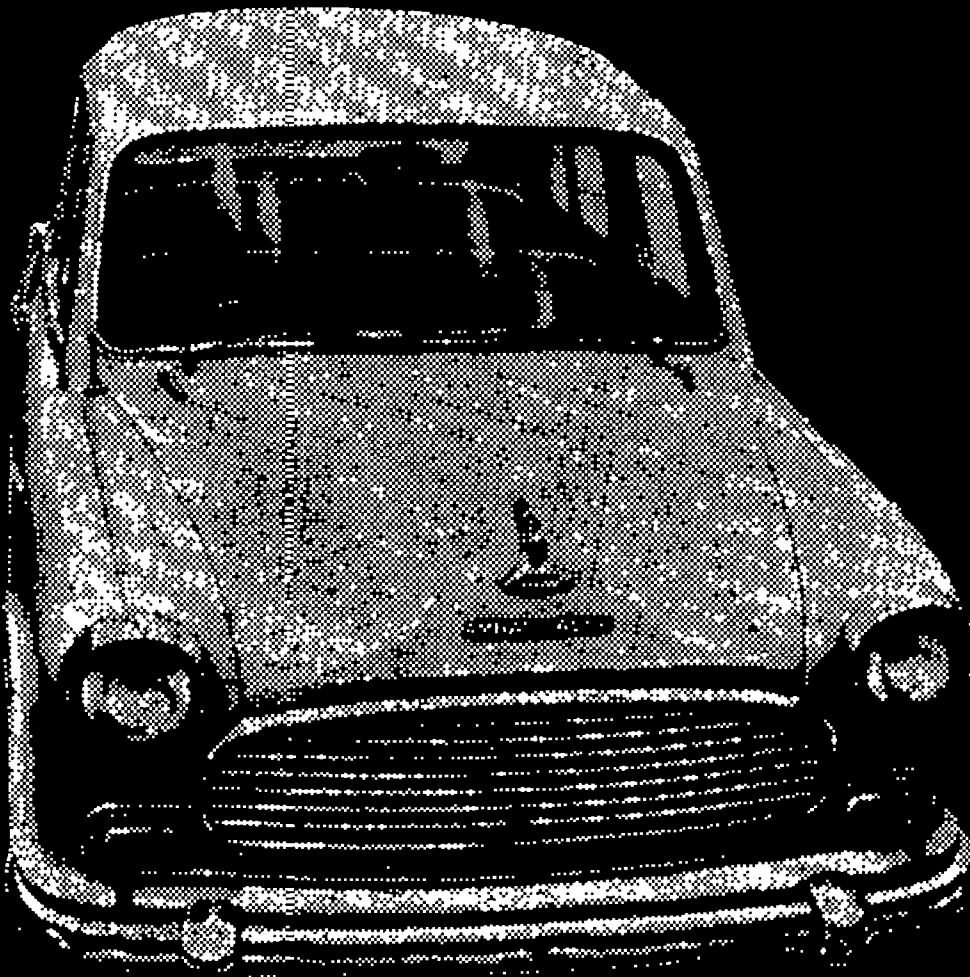
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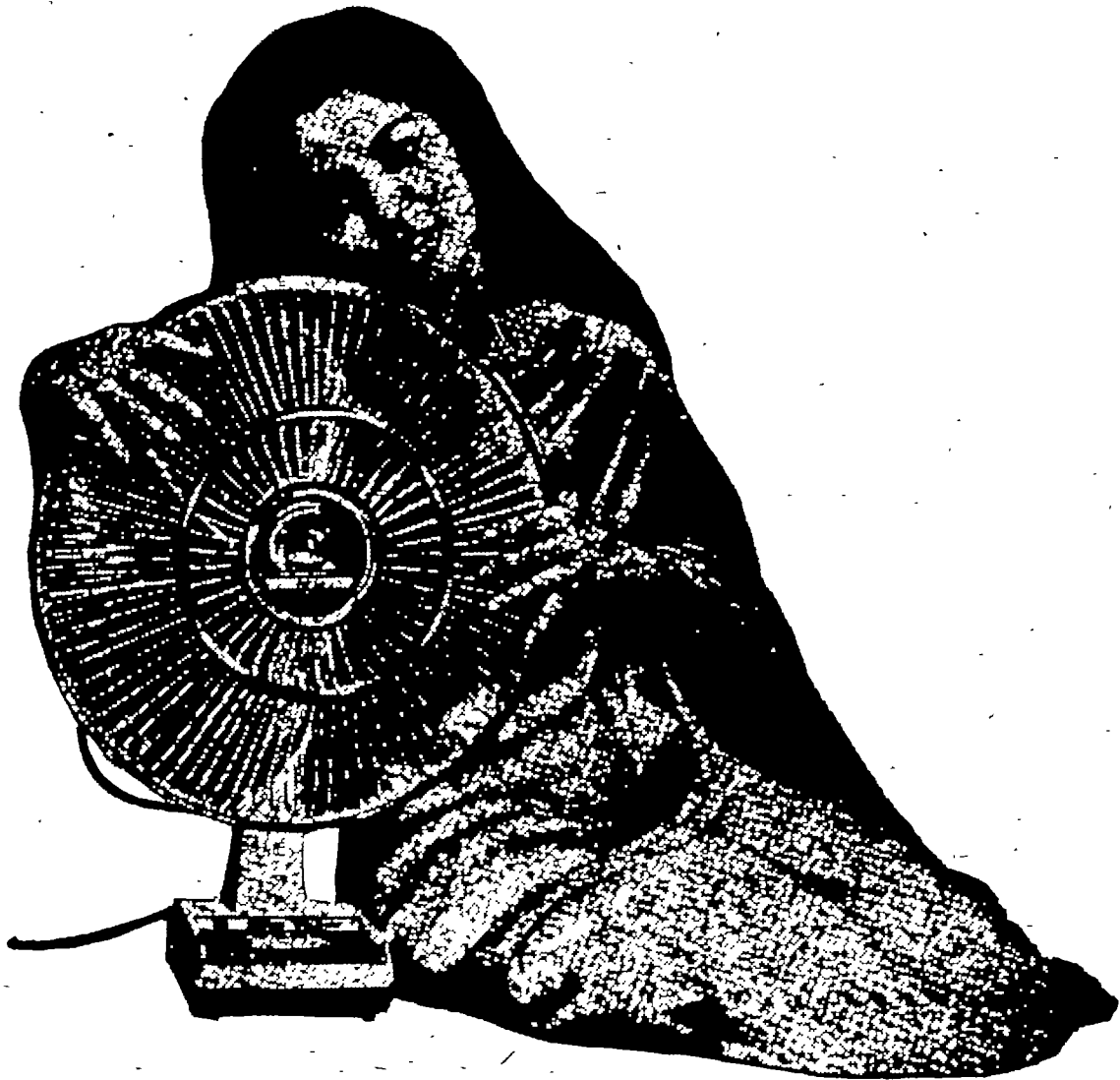
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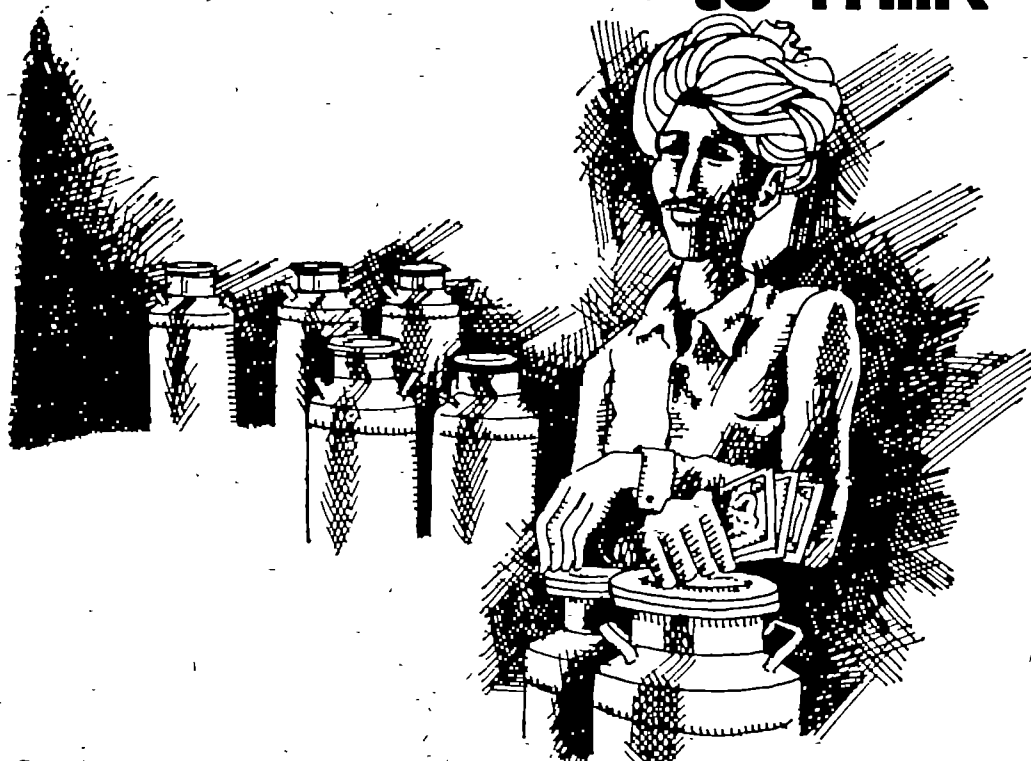
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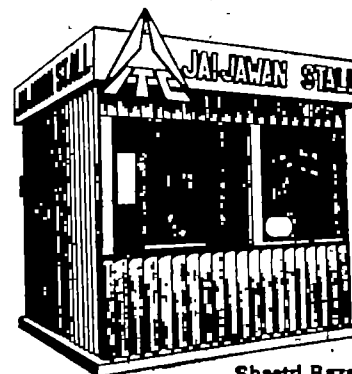
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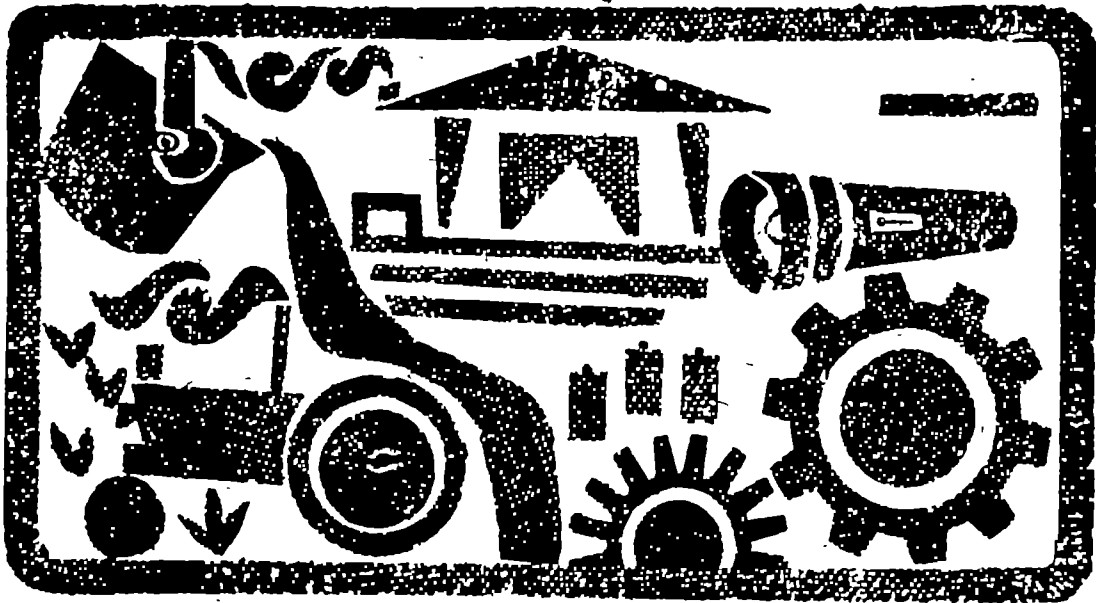
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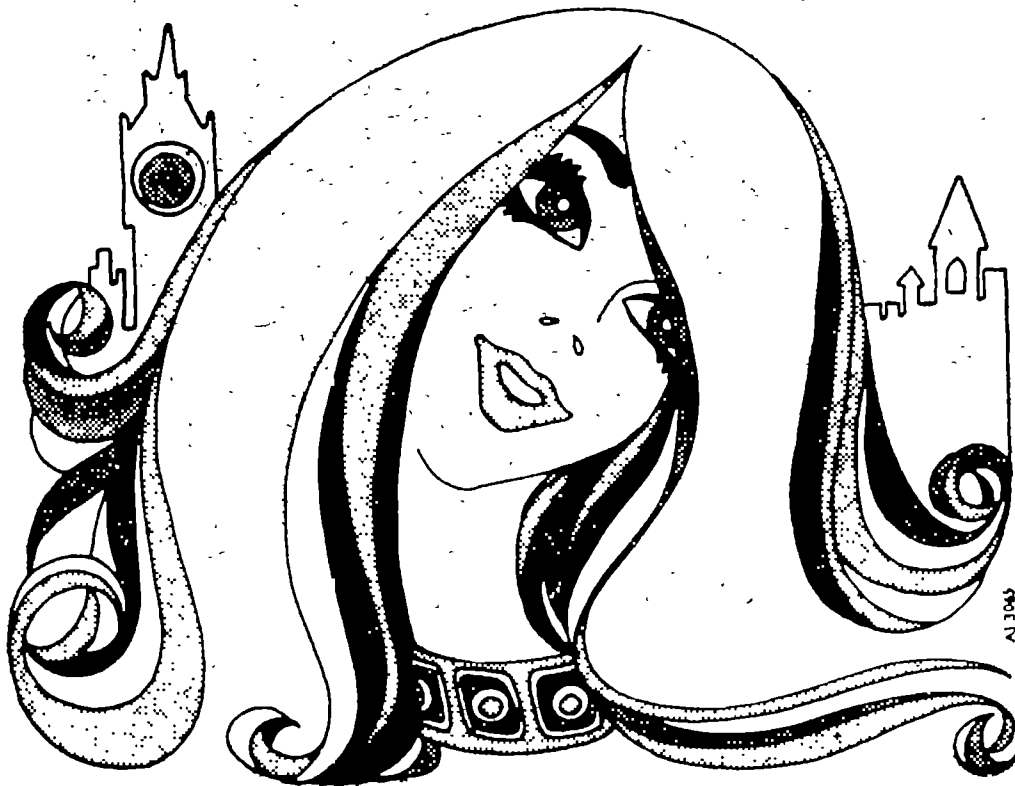
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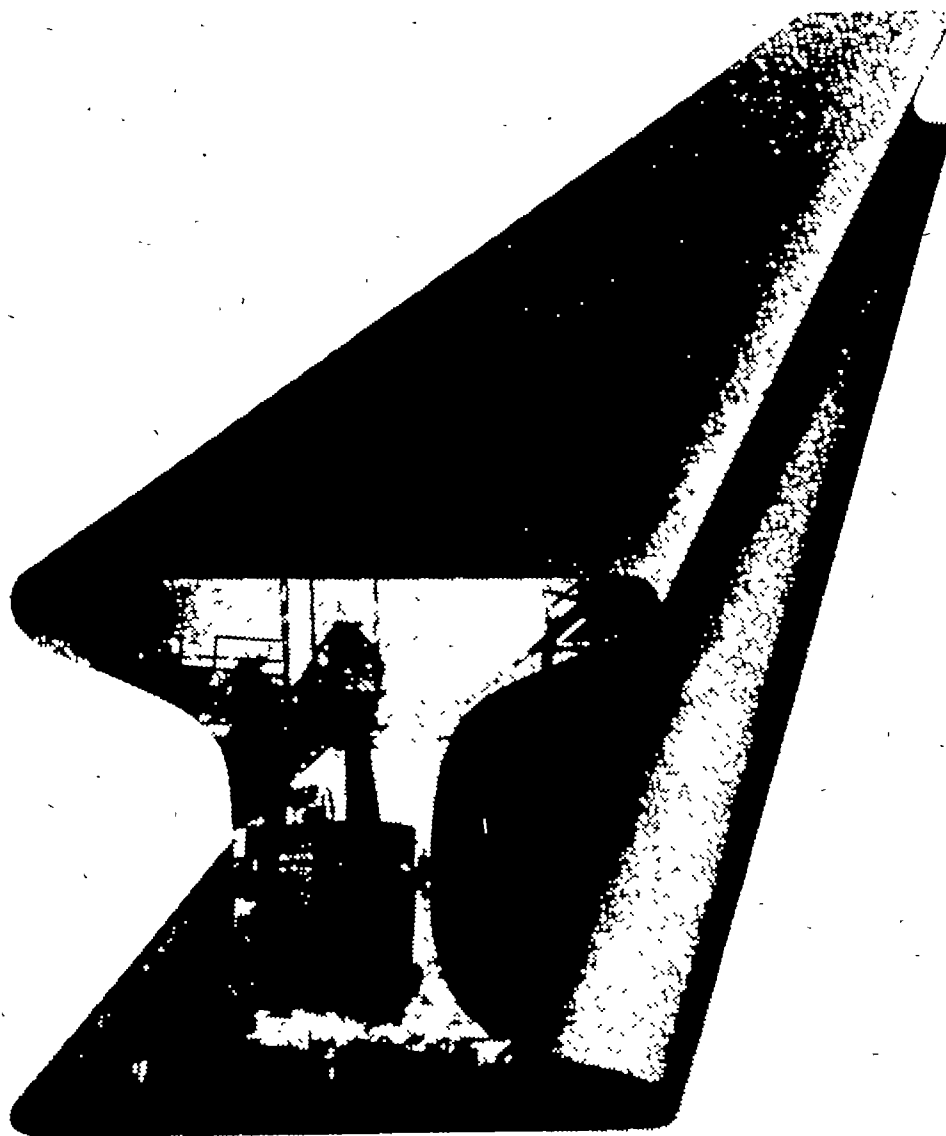
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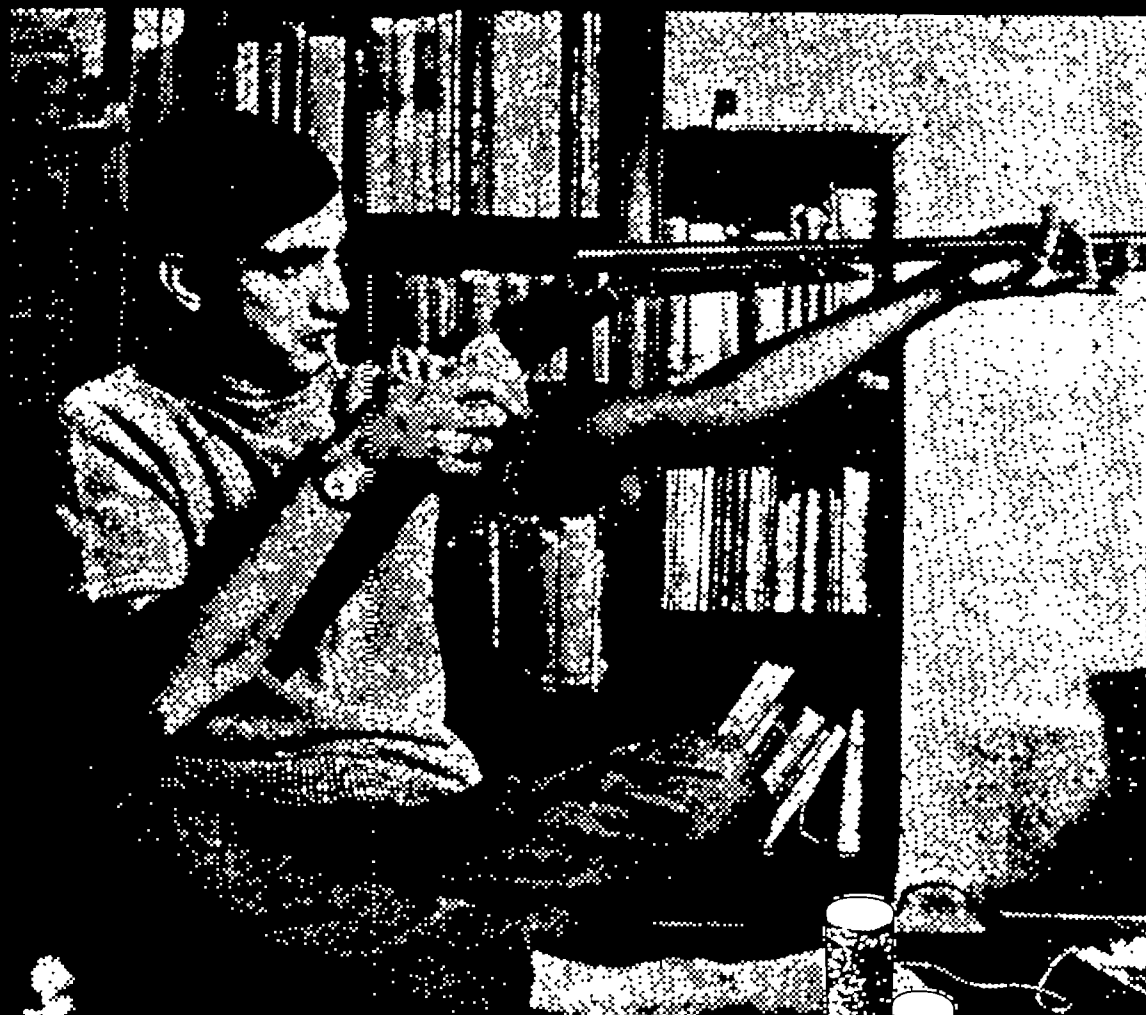
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**Bhadravati is another example of Indo-German co-operation built on human understanding and joint endeavour.**



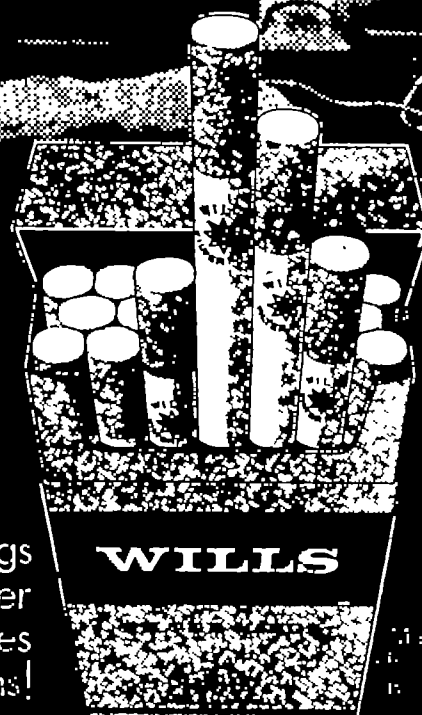
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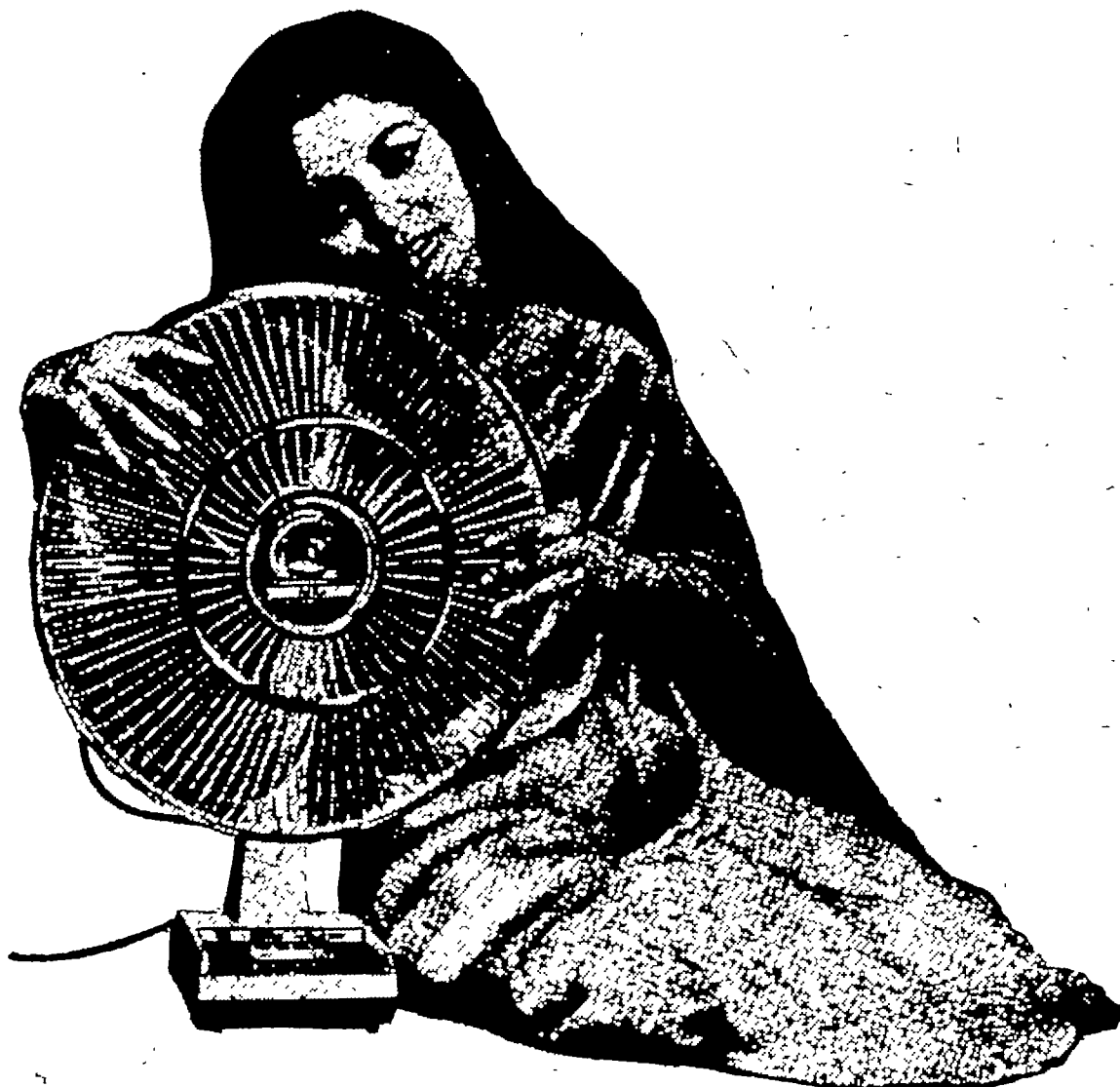
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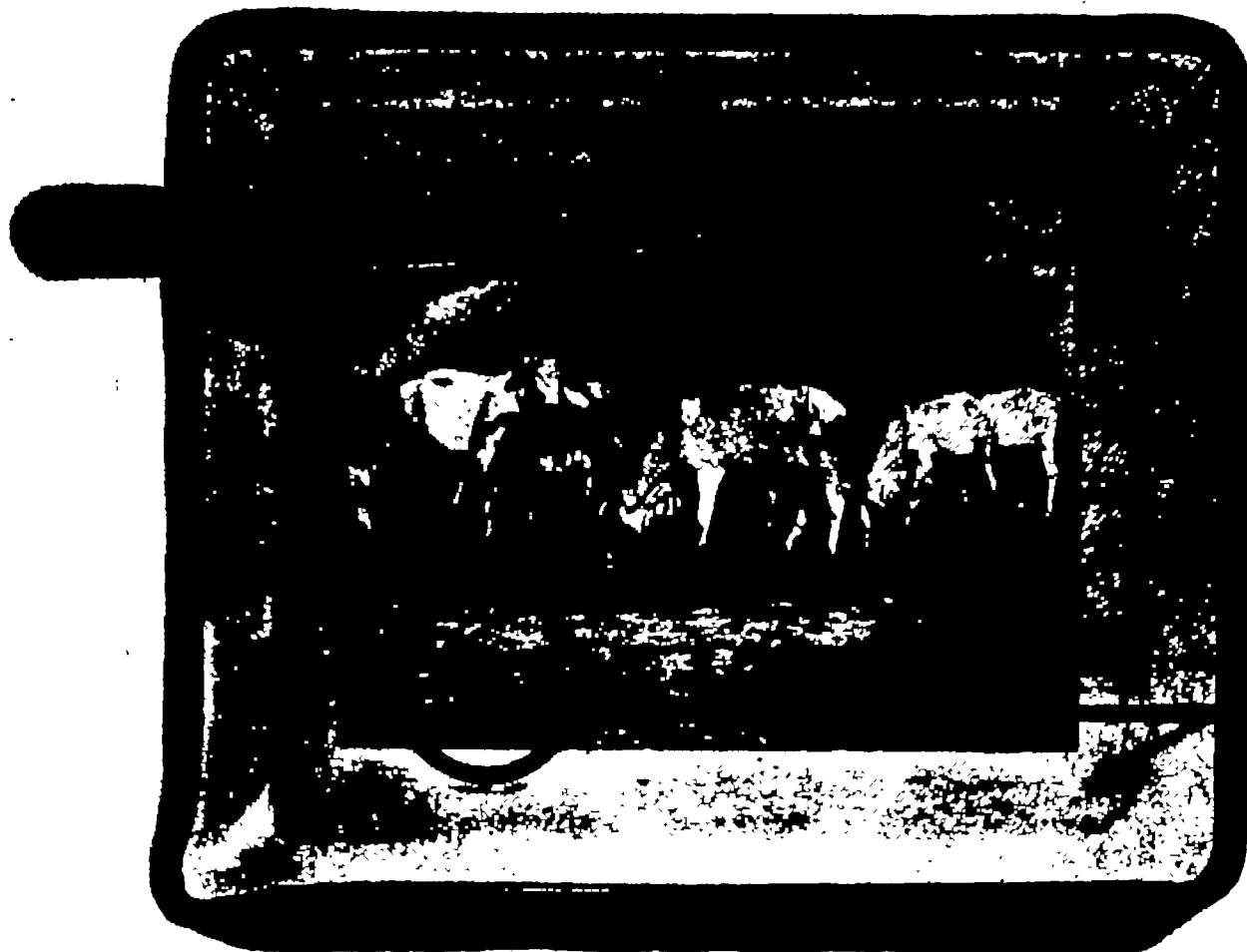
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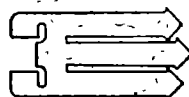
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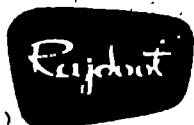
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**NEXT MONTH : INDIA 197**

# 148

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# The problem

THE pursuit of knowledge is considered by the average educated Indian to be antithetical to the pursuit of power. Politics on the campus, i.e., conflict over the allocation of intra-academic power, has generally been associated with either unprincipled factionalism, or with manipulative tendencies on the part of crooked and devious scholars out for their own ends. This sort of association is to be found among students (cut off from communication with their teachers or misreading the motives of the latter), in the editorial comments of daily newspapers, and even more so, among the high politicians of the Congress and of the extreme Right.

Even among the new Indian socialists, all decent people are expected righteously to hold their noses, when questions of power within the educational systems are brought to the forefront. The academic profession is stereotyped as a noble one, nobility is stereotyped by traditionally minded people as equitable with unworldliness, idealistic yearnings and selfless asceticism. Even today, the work of intra-academic organisations is supposed to have a low priority compared to the new American concept of the primacy of 'research output'.

Such equations and priorities are rooted in a certain image of the nature of Hindu society—itsself arising from the nature of India's colonial expansion. This image is one part of the disinclination of the modern average, educated Indian to view academic politics as even a legitimate activity, let alone to consider the possible dimensions in which it should develop. Before we can think of those necessary dimensions, it is necessary to contend that such equations are incorrect, and that it is possible to give a functional description of academic politics, which will demonstrate not only its

historical legitimacy in the past as well as in the present, but also its inevitable necessity for the management and organisation of a truly modern Indian educational system.

The concept of nobility was never linked with other-worldliness or asceticism in ancient or mediaeval India. This linkage is a contemporary Indian phenomenon. Nowadays our comfortable bourgeois neighbours or relatives try to dissuade young aspirants, hoping to join the teaching profession by the well-intentioned advice: 'Yes, yes, you are thinking of a noble profession—but you won't be able to support your wife and children on its income.' The ancient Hindu nobles, however—even in the ideal-type of the *varna*-modelled caste system—would have been, or at least would have called themselves—Rajputs or Kshatriyas or Brahmanas. In the mediaeval period, the nobility was a group of people, combining military or bureaucratic functions, ascribed to them individually and not necessarily heritably by Muslim kings or Hindu chiefs. In either period, power was a part of either the ethos or role-related activities of the nobility. The eschewal of power played no known part in the facts of known Indian history, or even in its written precepts, as distinct from the mythology which later developed round it.

Nor does Indian social history justify the linkage of the academic profession, *per se* with asceticism. It is commonly believed that ancient Indians were taught by saintly ascetics in small settlements in the woods. But for each of the mythical anecdotes of Ekalavya, or of Shakuntala's fellow-disciples in Kanvamuni's hermitage, one can match several factual reconstructions of life in the great monastic

establishments of Taxila and Nalanda, or the long teaching tradition in the establishments of Shringeri Math or of the Tirupati Sri Venkateswara temple. All the evidence in the shape of vast buildings or temple records show that they were no less concerned with problems of administration than were the secularised Abbots of the monastic establishments in pre-Henrician England. For instance, the Tirupati records maintained over several centuries show that its monks were always concerned with the problems of efficient allocation of its bounteous landed resources and, consequently, with decision-making on secular issues. One wonders how different they were from the Oxbridge Fellows of early modern England?

If such are the facts, then why should orthodox people believe that true nobility or academic pursuits demand a pattern of behaviour based on a renunciation of power, on the eschewal of conflict, or on the neglect of rewards, which are a concomitant of the apportioning of power? The reason for this originates in the early modern period of Indian history, which is more poignantly alive in traditionalist Indian consciousness than the less proximate past.

Beginning with the later years of Mughal rule, and accentuating with centuries of British rule in India, a wide-spread process was set in motion, which may be described as follows. The opportunities for participating in power were restricted to landholders and their retainers, who became the new landholding class; then to the castes of their bureaucratic servitors (Kayasthas and Vaidyas in Bengal, Mudaliars and Chettis in the South, Khattris, Kayasthas and Banias in the northern plains, Nagar

Brahmans and Pathare Prabhus in the West, and similar other *jatis*—and after these communities had been shaped into a heterogeneous and loosely confederated *comprador* class dependent on British rule, and living off it, finally power became the preserve of the new Herrenvolk, i.e., the British merchant-planter-soldier—Anglican and Jesuit clergy—bureaucratic combine. As this sclerosis in the access to social power spread with increasing force in the nineteenth century, Indians generally began to feel the squeeze out of power positions. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, they developed chauvinist and communalist forms of historical consciousness.

They sought to repress their own sense of inadequacy or impotence as regards the lack of present nobility, by a myth that nobility and academic excellence (the very virtues denied to them by alien rulers like Cornwallis or Macaulay) had no functional relationship with power in their own group memories. This warped view—or false consciousness—of Indian history was acceptable to the imperial administrators. On the other hand, it had a queer result in so far as equally chauvinist schools of Indian historians began to look for forms of contemporary power where it could not have existed in the same material form, i.e., in ancient India. They based themselves on the rather infantile logic: 'if you, the British, think you brought the republican ideal or corporate life to India, we discovered it before you or the Muslims. So there!'

To sum up, since the rising Indian bourgeoisie came off worst in their conflicts with their contemporary Indian slave position, they created a false consciousness for the lack of necessary conflict within their sense of corporate identity.

Even Indian nationalists, trying to set up parallel institutions, competing with British indoctrination of values expected the best academic to be an ascetic.

For instance, when after a schism in the then progressive Brahmo Samaj of Bengal, a populist radical group known as the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj was set up after 1878, under the aegis of two well-known democrats, Sivanath Sastri and Ananda Mohan Bose, one of its first programmes was the formation of the City School of Calcutta, which later grew into the City College. One of its teachers, Krishna Kumar Mitra, wrote in his Bengali autobiography, *Atmcharita* (Calcutta, 1937): 'In 1881, I accepted the post of teacher in the City School at Anandamohan Bose's request. Before that, the Ferguson College had been established in the town of Poona. A few highly educated and noble-minded individuals there had taken this vow—that they would accept the vocation of teaching for the purpose of bringing new life to the land of Maharashtra, but no one of them would accept more than Rs. 75 as a salary. Gokhale, Tilak and others all worked in this college on the salary of Rs. 75. Anandamohan Bose and others founded the City School according to a similar inspiration.

'Those who became the first teachers in the City School were mostly inspired by the same idea in accepting the position. I took the post of a teacher at a salary of Rs. 40 (per month) (pp. 183-184).'

'He had earlier written: 'I have earlier said that I had given up the resolution to practise as a lawyer. [for which he had been educated, since he felt that advocacy led him away from the absolute truth—*satya*.] It is true that there is no prospect of gaining wealth from the noble act of imparting education, but I was prepared to be a teacher, since I realised that it would make it possible for me to lead my life truthfully (*sadbhabe*) (p. 183).'

Krishna Kumar's ideals inspired many nationalists during the Swadeshi movement in Bengal. Of course, none of these pioneers eschewed politics. They trained up cadres of students who formed the vanguard of the national liberation movement in Maharashtra and Bengal in the twentieth century. A forerunner of the City School itself, was the Students' Association, of which Surendranath Banerjee (then associated with the Ripon College, Calcutta, later the Surendranath College) and A. M. Bose were leaders.

During the anti-Partition agitation in post-1905, political considerations led to a movement for boycotting Calcutta University and its affiliated colleges and schools, because they were aided and often controlled by the Imperial Government which it was the objective of the

nationalists to boycott. Bengali students formed the National Council of Education in Jadavpur on political premises, as a part of a student action to form a parallel system of academic indoctrination and student power.

Though it was not a success at first, because the classes from which these students came had not forsaken the ideology of British rule, and they could not gain hegemony within their community, yet the present Jadavpur University is run by the same National Council. Many of our present day educational institutions are the results of a heritage of the politicisation of academic life. The anti-politicisation slogans are thus later phenomena, phenomena of escapism and isolation from the main currents of social and economic life, where politicisation is an inevitability.

Be that as it may, after Indian independence, teachers were expected to keep away from politics. Of course, teaching was becoming increasingly more professionalised—more time was needed to keep up with international research output. This race with the output of data in the western world monographs and journals, and the urge to 'go West' occasionally to shop at the metropolitan market place of knowledge, was basically a function of the increasing dependence of India on the luxury output of the USA and Great Britain. In the macro-dimension, this reflects the impoverishment of India because of the much faster rate of (educational) growth of advanced capitalist countries on which India has continued to be (linguistically) dependent. This dependent impoverishment—a dialectical process—perpetuates the system of time allocation in which keeping up academically with the Jones appears to be more integrally necessary for professional excellence than political consciousness.

On the other hand, isolation grew between the general communities of teachers and students. The quick spread of student unrest can be correlated with the slow pace of economic development and of institutional justice in India. But this unrest was vulgarly ascribed to lack of interest in the classroom lectures, and to the precepts of faction politics supposedly inculcated by teachers. These were basically consequences of the general situation and not their cause.

But this ascribed reason was seized upon by both the government officials connected with education, and by those who were influential in the academic establishments, to propound a sort of neo-Platonic idealist solution: politics was said to be for the grown ups, i.e., for those who had left the universities. It was supposed to be a routinised and professional activity meant only for the initiated, the 'Guardians'. Teachers were not supposed to prepare the minds of

young men to participate in the democratic process: only political scientists were paid to justify the established order. Teaching became dogmatic and objectively anti-empirical.

A direct outcome of this neo-Platonic idealism may be found in the present catastrophic situation represented on the one hand by the arid formalism of teaching and what passes by the name of research in most Indian colleges, and on the other hand, by the dialectical movement of students towards either apathy or escapism at one pole, and ultra-left radicalism or political adventurism on the other pole. The historical reason for these phenomena are ignored by the popular image of 'the groves of academe'.

This ignorance of the historical conditions for academic chaos is matched, at the contemporary decision-making level, with the exception of a few *avant garde* groups in institutions such as Delhi University, with an ignorance of the essential realities and necessities of modern academic life. A university today, if it is worth the name, costs anything annually up to several crores of rupees. Resources of this order, the necessity of their outlay in terms of relevance and contribution to present and future Indian conditions, as well as the future prospects of the investment itself in terms of the direct production of several hundred teachers and research workers, and several thousand more alumni to be diffused in Indian society, all mean very clearly that a great deal of public power is at stake.

In the domain of educational management and organisation, politics, i.e., competition for the allocation of goals and resources, can only be healthy or unhealthy—its objective reality in the academic environment cannot be wished out of existence. Even with so unradical a bourgeois premise as democracy, i.e., the harmony of capitalist interests—even if tacked on it is the slogan of an instant 'socialistic' pattern, which the Ruling Congress seeks to inculcate—even under these conditions, we have to show concern about the primary choices which will condition power decisions, such as the ones outlined above. Today's choices represent the framework in which tomorrow's children will be educated.

This should make us concerned with the nature of those systems and organisational patterns of authority which should regulate and exercise the power which indubitably lies in the educational institution of the size of an university. When the foundations of the Indian university system were being laid, the political interests of late Victorian British imperialism in India (viz., to deny initiative to the newly westernised, educated and incipiently rationalist elite) coincided with the naïve acceptance by the same elite of the Victorian concept of

the ivory tower, as a safeguard against the evils of power [viz. concepts, the pursuit of material ends or secular (as distinct from metaphysical) power.] This coincidence led to control organisations, built on the premise of hierarchical authority and on the abhorrence of participative systems of power, i.e., ones in which those to be affected by the decisions may participate, at critical points, in the relevant making of decisions.

The Radhakrishnan Committee's Report on Education, written immediately after independence, did not at all challenge the hierarchical regulation of the educational system. Political independence of itself (i.e., shorn of what Antonio Gramsci has called working-class hegemony) does not necessarily lead to the collapse of what our fathers' generation called 'the slave mentality.' This slave mentality may be ingrained in us, or even in our children, if political independence is to be associated merely with the hegemony in civil society of middle-class culture, trained and educated in the habits of colonial dependence.

The last Education Commission, headed by Professor Kothari did, however, take note of the imperative need for democracy in allocation of academic power. However, it is only a further sad comment on what is nowadays called 'the craze for foreign'—a less brutal way of referring to the slave mentality—that the new and fashionable concern for limited democracy in the realm, which following U.S. language, is now being called 'academic governance', follows very tardily on the heels of similar ideas of participative management, developed in the western educational system as a defensive response to the student power movement of 1965 to 1968.

It is open to suspicion that the Kothari Commission's sudden concern for participative management flows more from the theoretical proddings of western consultants, now ubiquitous in most Indian managerial planning and top-level training and blissfully unaware of the hard and multi-form realities of Indian life, than from a perception which can be had from any average young Indian university teacher of the particular and regionally-differentiated problems of the provincial Indian universities (as distinct from the supposedly critical mass of Delhi).

As it is, the concept of participative management, as developed in the USA and in Western Europe, is the direct result of the fear among the liberal bourgeois leadership in the industrial (e.g., the Glacier Experiment of Lord Wilfred Brown) and educational institutions that these institutions would crumble before student discontent, unless some of the student leadership (ring-leaders was the word used by colonial managers) could be allured into indi-

vidual (and preferably non-mandatory) membership of key decision-making committees relating to syllabi, financial loans and (only when the threateners pressed hard) teaching personnel. The concept is thus one which is meant to stultify the urges of workers or students; to confront repression by a show of solidarity; and to use these confrontations over power issues as a means of raising the struggle of the exploited in general against the representatives of the exploiters to a higher plane of success.

Participative management in educational institutions, for instance, blunts student consciousness by enabling them to pick out a surrogate leadership which can be blindly followed if it gains economic privileges such as financial loan schemes, grace marks, higher grades or postponement of dates in examinations. Or it can be blindly abused if it fails, or what is worse from the point of an economising rank and file, it fights for long-gestation benefits, e.g., more grants to students, instead of loans on capitalist rates of interest, higher standards of teaching and marking, maintenance of a system of order and regularity in examinations instead of mere laxity and leniency, etc. Thus, the concept of participative management is objectively a tool used by advanced capitalism to bring within the ambit of its managerial group, by the use of theories of social control, all potential dissidents who could act as focal points of protest against the waste inherent in the system.

But such an advanced capitalism does not exist in India. In fact, capitalism is, itself, yet in a subordinate stage of development and may just be beginning to bid for predominance as a mode of production. In such a stage of historical development, the outmoded system of colonialism can only be bolstered up if concepts of participative management are imported wholesale from the USA and Britain.

Where junior teachers have no say in the running of their institutions, where even directors of advanced centres of education are overridden by external bureaucrats sitting on autonomous governing bodies, who mistake themselves (only at the bi-monthly Board Meeting) for *zamin-dars* presiding over an 18th-century *kutcherry*, there student representation on routine committees without total responsibility for budgeting can only be a retrograde step. Not that such representation is *per se* bad; but when it comes, it should be coupled with a greater elective share in budgeting and disciplinary control over universities by the teachers, research workers and employees' associations themselves; and this is as yet not a fact or even a common slogan in Indian academic politics.

As it is, the academic democracy envisaged by the Kothari Commission does not even seek

to provide those elected by the university community with either full powers over the purse or the right to rescind decisions taken by appointed officials. 'Guided participative management' is the most that is offered. But, what will be the content of this guidance, how can guidance be replaced by self-motivation; in other words, how can teachers and students become together the subjects, creating their own future, instead of remaining the objects, inert under traditional circumstances of academic democracy in a capitalist State.

Let us note that a movement away from hierarchical, authoritarian administration in the universities towards communal deliberative decision-making would reduce the predictability of the content of decisions. For those who like their lives to be fully ordered and predictable, this would undoubtedly be somewhat threatening, especially if they are outsiders, remote from the shaping of events. Yet, the willingness to live with uncertainty is a *sine qua non* of a vigorous, intellectual community. Unpredictability does not mean a necessary regime of anarchy; it only means that the forces of order and social control would be derived from evolving norms, articulated by the teachers, research workers and students themselves, since they constitute the population responsible for nurturing a productive social system within the groves of academe. The security, which may be had from the flats of the official in his well-padded revolving chair, may be lacking in such community control; but after a century of conspicuous academic sterility, it is necessary to think of the possible alternatives. Democratisation or decay appears to be the choice before contemporary Indian academic politics.

Since communal decision-making would vastly expand both the issues—and the points—where decisions would have to be made (or reviewed), such a change would entail a substantial quantitative increase in activity that might be called politics. *The simplest kind of political issue would centre on the academic version of the 'question: who is boss?'* Without a rule-book to settle the issue, the answer would sometimes turn into trivia: who would be the Chairman or Convenor of the largest number of (or of the most important) committees, empowered to recommend or to execute decisions, and thus who could exercise his or her discretion to facilitate or to thwart the consideration of a particular issue?

However, if Heads of Departments can be elected, then they can be rotated, and if committee work is delegated to other teachers also, then this is at least better than university teachers being stuck with a procrastinating, permanent Head of Department, till retirement does them part.

The second political issue would focus on the framing of rules, that is the formal expression

of norms, a primary human task for expeditiously conducting all our business. A good rule ensures a satisfactory outcome for several recurring situations. Similarly, bad rules ensure the repetition of irritating outcomes. But these rules which standardise creative decision-making, also place discretionary power in certain hands; and this potential discretionary power is a natural object for political manoeuvre.

The third set of political issues resides in the context of the management of innovation. One of the results of any important innovation is a re-distribution of resources, (broadly defined to include money, prestige, leisure, peace of mind, etc.) Consequently, resistance to any innovation may reasonably be expected from most of those who believe that their interests are thus threatened, unless of course they can be persuaded about the availability of compensatory gains.

Academic micro-political activity of these sorts would appear to be entirely legitimate and healthy. But if the norms governing it show less concern for the prerequisites of a democratic and creative academic community, and militate in the interests of the personal gain and glory of those delegated to keep the system functioning, then the consequences can be highly disruptive and unhealthy.

Let us consider a few settings in which academics are likely to compete in a routine way for power. The simplest is that of professional organisations such as the ones controlled by, say, medical doctors or historians or literati of a particular city. In this case, the resources controlled have hitherto been small, and the primary identifications of members have tended to be with their employing institution and hence dispersed. Holding of office nevertheless conveys some prestige or qualification for promotion in the sphere of employment: so there is some tension between the 'ins' and 'outs', the latter usually viewing themselves as 'innovators' as against the ones called 'the stagnators' or 'the Neo-Syndicate' currently in office. Innovation or stagnation are, at best, expressed in terms of papers written, or not written, or of the ideological premises supported or books written by the objects of discussion. But the terms often degenerate into abusive labels for categorising the allocation of posts on the Executive Committee or of the utilisation of the minimal funds (more probably deficit accounts) handled by these associations.

On the other hand, university departments have a more complex political domain. Departmental Heads, appointed permanently, have traditionally tried to ensure that there is no leakage of power from their offices. Such Heads look upon themselves as founts of authority in

the sphere of patronage to posts within the Department, as primary decision-makers with regard to appointments to examinerships (a lucrative and annual bonus of income in the poverty stricken academic profession) and as the sole nexus of contact with the rest of the profession in India (by means of selection of their own candidates or of rejection of pet aversions, when invited to sit as experts on panels, or by means of nominations of departmental members to Seminars or other learned gatherings).

Those who have the power to grant favours can command obsequiousness, which is often given and is occasionally greatly relished, thus again reproducing the atmosphere of a petty Zamindar's *baithak*, or *kutcherry*. It is not even unknown in some of the more moribund universities or academic institutes that a spy ring of aspirants to power should form round the Head, with or without his encouragement, the participants acting with Hobbesian individualism, or in cliques (advancing some special interests, but disunited in other issues), or in cabals (groups formed ephemerally to capture power, after which or in cases of failure, they tend to dissolve). The members of these rings clog the lines of communication between the Head and his non-attached colleagues or students. Occasionally, the cliques and cabals work through the adumbration of special issues in the Teachers Associations, and departmental issues become the subject of alliances or bargains for a power struggle, conducted at an all-university or professional association level.

Sectionalism, particularism and factionalism may thus be a dysfunctional result of the style of academic politics outlined above. But they are also the direct—and not just the dysfunctional—results of running an organisation of intellectuals by means of despotic flats, uncontested by open controversy. The remedy is to improve the norms of general academic political activity: the best way of paralysing the patient is to ban politics.

This has been a very general statement of the legitimacy and need for academic micropolitics. More important questions remain. What are the spheres of activity in which particular segments of the university population may communally act as collaborators or contestants; and should these spheres be specifically demarcated, or allowed to evolve according to *ad hoc* needs and emergent issues? Secondly, how can the sort of participative management of power by different segments of the academic organisation, envisaged above, be made to work in the best interests of all, i.e. what norms should be evolved, and how? But these are questions which need to be taken up in far greater detail than is permitted by space here.

BARUN DE

# Science politicking

K. R. BHATTACHARYA

I AM afraid I cannot see the point of the poser, which merely tries to prove the legitimacy of academic politics. If politics is defined as working to get the best advantage out of a situation for oneself or one's associates, then politics is inherent in any organized group. This includes even the family and, naturally, includes the academies. Therefore, it seems hardly necessary to belabour with circuitous historical precedents to justify the existence of politics in academic institutions. What surely is more relevant in the context of the topic, is a description of the state of politics existing therein, an analysis of how and why they arise, and a forecast of the lines that they may take in the future.

Such an attempt is made below with reference to the scientific research institutions in the country. Politics in these institutions will be described in the form of a description of the state of the laboratories and of their manpower; the frustrations, aspirations, and the manoeuvrings of the latter; the reasons thereof; and the shape that these might take in the future.

The most striking feature of the contemporary Indian scientific research scene is the profound frustration that prevails among all its participants (including those who may be widely identified as the villains of the piece).

The reasons of this unhappiness as given out, and as also analysed by various authors, are varied and broadly fall under three categories:

i) '*Corrupted authority*' theory: that the authorities are all cor-

rupt, interested only in empire building and in personal benefits and aggrandizement; that they keep themselves surrounded with courts of sycophants; and that there is constant favouritism, corruption and nepotism (a common saying is 'thieves rule...').

ii) '*Evil personality*' theory: the employees think that the director is the source of all evil and if somehow he was changed everything would be O.K.; the directors think that the director-in-chief is an evil man; the director-in-chief thinks that the directors are the real villains; and the directors in turn believe that the staff is lazy, worthless and greedy.

iii) '*Management failure*' theory: that the dynamics of the management of a creative activity is not yet realized in India; that there is no 'atmosphere' for creative work; that there is no conscious attempt at locating and rewarding merit which alone can set a tradition of excellence; that many directors do not understand the methodology of science and hence only encourage tinkering in the name of applied research; that there is too much insistence on 'extension and consultancy' at the cost of creative work; that the systems of recruitment and promotion as also of administration are archaic and unsuited to the need of science; that there is not enough freedom and autonomy for either good research or good research management, etc.

All the above theories are no doubt true in some context or

other, although their applicability varies from laboratory to laboratory and from time to time. While the first two theories are confined largely to the realm of complaints (either verbal or in newspapers), the third one has received a good deal of scholarly attention.<sup>1</sup>

iv) While the above are put forward to explain the frustration of scientists and the failure of the laboratories, another set of theories are also advanced to explain the general ineffectiveness of science in the country. These may be broadly classified as 'policy-cum-ecology theories' and their main burdens are:

a) that there is no proper science policy in India, nor any statutory body with appropriate machinery engaged in an objective method of science planning;

b) that government support to science is poor;

c) that the conditions and methodology of transfer of laboratory results to industrial processes are not fully appreciated; and

d) that the social ecology with its traditional values and religious beliefs are a serious obstacle to the development of science.<sup>2</sup>

**T**hese theories too have received considerable attention in the literature, particularly from social

scientists and scientist-administrators<sup>3</sup>.

All these theories, whatever their validity, only beg the question: why so? We will examine this presently. But these complaints are symptomatic of the bankruptcy of the research institutions and the state of politics within them. That this view is also shared by the lay public, is revealed by the spate of complaints in press and Parliament and in a number of study reports about the failure of India's science to have any impact on the country's development, and by the bickering and mud-slinging in the Parliament and the press, culminating in the recent Great Controversy over CSIR<sup>4</sup>.

**B**efore analysing the fundamental causes of this pathetic picture, it will be useful to briefly review the historical stages through which science and technology have passed in India, and the undercurrents of politics and aspirations that

characterized each phase. Four distinct stages can be discerned.

a) First is the period of slow transition. Professors S. N. Sen<sup>5</sup> has shown that despite close and long contact with European science during its very creative phase, introduction of western science in India was extremely tardy until towards the turn of the last century. He explained this with reference to the character and the purpose of the science, saying that the activity was limited mainly to field sciences (trigonometrical, geodetic, geological, etc., surveys) and plant sciences—the object being either commercial, or the military and administrative and economic control of the sub-continent. Further, at the beginning there was a clear policy of not allowing the art to be transmitted to the Indians, and later, when it became essential in the interest of the colonialist, opportunities were given only in subordinate ranks. Due to this policy of exclusion, the substantial and exciting work of a century by many able minds was largely lost to the people. There was also no policy of transmitting higher science education, and it is only towards the beginning of this century that such a policy was started, by the incessant demand of the nationalist movement, in the form of opening of university colleges of science. Since then, the leadership in research passed over largely to the universities.

b) The second is a creative phase which began at this time and continued roughly till independence. Scientific research at this time was mostly confined to fundamental sciences, carried on in the universities and allied institutions, in an atmosphere of modest facilities and austerity. As a result only the strongly motivated and able minds were attracted to the profession, who set up undisputed leadership by personal examples of brilliance, dedication, honesty and simplicity which all led to a harmonious creative atmosphere on the one hand, to substantial

1. See for instance (a) 'The scientist and his research,' *Seminar*, No. 36 (Aug. 1962); (b) 'Our brain drain,' *Seminar*, No. 92 (Apr. 1967); (c) Bhabha, H. J., 'Science and the problems of development,' *Vijnan Karmee*, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 10 (Jan. 1966); (d) Bhattacharya, K. R., 'The recruitment quagmire of India's science,' *Vijnan Karmee*, Vol. 18, No. 9, p. 1 (Sept. 1966); (e) Bhattacharya, K. R., 'Research in India's laboratories,' in 'Some Problems of Science in India,' 20th Anniversary Souvenir, Mysore Branch of ASWL, p. 11 (1968); (f) Chandrasekhar, S., *Yojana*, No. 24 (1968); (g) 'Scientific research in India' (editorial), *Science and Culture*, Vol. 34, p. 471 (1968); (h) Papers & Proceedings, National Seminar on Management of Scientific Research Laboratories, Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad, October 1970.

2. This view, although firmly held by some has been contended in Sinha, Surajit, 'Science, Technology and Culture,' India International Centre, New Delhi, 1970.

3. See for example (a) Mendelsohn, Kurt, 'Science in India; Obstacles to progress,' *Times of India* 23, & 24 Nov. 1964; (b) Rahman, A. 'Planning of scientific research,' *Vijnan Karmee*, Vol. 17, No. 10, p. 19 (Oct. 1965); (c) Selected papers from CAAUST Symposium, *Vijnan Karmee*, Vol. 18, No. 5 (May 1966); (d) Papers presented in and proceedings of Prime Minister's Science Round Table, *Vijnan Karmee*, Vol. 19, No. 10 (Oct. 1967); (e) Parthasarathy, Ashok, 'India's Science policy ideology,' *Vijnan Karmee*, Vol. 20, No. 6, p. 6, (June 1968); (f) Narasimhan, R., 'Focus on Indian science and technology,' *Science Today*, Vol. 5, No. 7, p. 6 (Jan. 1971); (g) Nayudamma, Y. 'Promoting the industrial application of research in an underdeveloped country,' *Minerva*, Vol. 5 No. 3, p. 323 (1967); (h) Mehta, P. C., 'Management of industrial research' in 'Some Problems of Science in India,' 20th Anniversary Souvenir, Mysore Branch of ASWL, p. 23 (1968); (i) Rahman, A., 'Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and Prof. T. R. Seshadri,' *Vijnan Karmee*, Vol. 20, No. 1, p. 7 (Jan. 1968); (j) 'Science in India today: A symposium,' *Samatit Prakashan*, No. 6 (Oct.-Dec. 1970).

4. There are minor exceptions to the above situation, e.g., a few fundamental research institutions even today, and many university departments at any rate till the fifties. There are objective reasons for these differences which are not difficult to analyse, but will not be dealt here further in consideration of space.

5. 'The introduction of western science in India during the 18th and 19th century' in Sinha, Surajit (in footnote 2).



and brilliant contributions on the other.

**P**olitics, if any, so far as we can surmise, was confined at this time to competition in excellence, or to put it differently, to satisfaction of the ego as contrasted to that of more mundane instincts—scope for which in any case was severely restricted. It should also be noted that although the atmosphere was essentially feudal, due to the overall circumstances, the feudal principles of benevolent aristocracy and one-family got emphasized rather than those of exploitation.

c) The next phase, we may call it the 'feudal' phase, came with the resolve of the independent government, and the nationalist leadership before that, to develop and harness science and technology for the industrial development of the country. With this laudable objective came gradually into being giant research and development (R & D) organizations financed by the government which are represented today by CSIR, AEC, ICAR, ICMR, DRDO, etc.

Three accompanying circumstances should be noted to understand what happened to these institutions. Firstly, there was no precise demand on the institutions. There was a vague idea that we needed science and technology for the country's development, and with that idea money and facilities were given to science and technology. What precisely was to be done with these facilities was neither known to the givers nor to the acceptors. Secondly, these huge organizations with abundant resources and numerous opportunities of career advancement came into being at a time when political democracy was transplanted on a soil which was a mixture of feudal structures and attitudes, old tribal and caste relationships and a bureaucratic and largely alienated administrative system. Thirdly, with the advent of planning, licensing and 'socialistic pattern', substantial spheres of power structure were gradually opening up in the government arena.

It is not surprising with this background that the organizations

became patterned after typical feudal, hierarchical establishments with a command chain of big and little bosses and with an openly tyrannical atmosphere. It is as if, the zamindaries that were abolished (or said to be abolished) came and re-established themselves in these public institutions, which became instruments solely for securing status, power and self-interest—with some science and research thrown in to provide the rationale. Publication of papers and claims for discoveries also became matters of self-interest. While the big and little bosses openly launched a twin programme of misappropriation of subordinates' work and 'publish or perish', the subordinates, under the force of the social and economic relationship, instead of resisting, collaborated in this effort as a means of getting some personal benefit in return. If nothing glorious came out from these laboratories during this phase either in fundamental research or in technology, this is only in obedience to natural laws.

**P**olitics in this stage then consisted in waiting, in paying obsequies to one's top and in tyrannizing one's bottom—grabbing and offering all the while, and always silently manoeuvring to work oneself into the top command structure. The vast crowded bottom was permeated with whispers, gossips, impotent rage, and of course fear. It will be noted that essentially the same feudal spirit as seen in the earlier phase got adapted here, on account of the various mercenary and power opportunities, to emphasize its exploitative aspect.

d) *The 'bourgeois' phase:* The above phase underwent a slow transformation from the early and middle sixties. Rumbings were heard from all sides about the terrible stranglehold in the laboratories, which slowly grew in volume as more and more people went abroad and returned and found that the bureaucratic and feudal atmosphere was not quite conducive to the satisfaction of their own inflated expectations. These rumbings also got big sup-

port in the famous Joseph Episode which shook the country and also Parliament. The liberal leaders in the government, who were probably ignorant of the true atmosphere within the institutions, were shaken by these revelations and felt that some reform was essential.

**A** number of changes were therefore brought forth in the leadership and in the administrative structure, with a conscious effort to relieve the suffocation and tyranny. The atmosphere in the laboratories became more free thereafter—in the sense that the rigid structure, wherein everybody's spatial location was well-identified, was somewhat loosened allowing the individuals to vibrate over a much wider field<sup>6</sup>. At the same time new ideas of management and inter-disciplinary project working, largely imported from abroad,—and generally in line with ideas on 'creative management' being thrown out by foreign-financed Institutes of Management in India—began to be played about with.

Yet, the overall feeling of ineffectual working in a vacuum remained, so that the interplay of mutual interests and politics not only did not disappear but flourished now in a more acute manner because the portals of politics were now opened to a much greater number of aspirants than before.

Those trained in the old relationship took time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but the opportunity was really seized by the 'young progressives', particularly new entrants returning from abroad. By their sophistication and audacity, they quickly set about to build new centres of a power structure to advance their own interests. Simultaneously, abundant foreign funds, national and international seminars and conferences, and international programmes (like FAO, UNDP, ECAFE, etc.) threw up unprecedented opportunities of career advancement, of national and international travel, and of acting as experts in national and inter-

6. It should be noted that this process may not yet be complete in all laboratories.

national arenas, which provided grist to the mill of competition.

So the politics that unfolded in the laboratories in this phase consisted of cut-throat competition among the middle-level participants to win approval by audacity and glamour, of 'natives' vs 'foreigners', of 'traditional' vs 'modern', of 'young' vs 'old', and of course individual vs individual. In the lower levels, the enterprising and the audacious aspired and tried to join the arena of the power battle; while the vast majority, unused to 'modernism' or 'freedom' and too inhibited to join the battleground, started an incessant stream of wailing and sniping, not unlike the chirping of a thousand birds before nightfall. And this is the stage—shall we call it the bourgeois phase—where we are today.

**W** now come to an attempt to analyse these conditions in terms of the prevailing social, economic and political forces.

a) *Science in quarantine*: The first point to understand is the relationship between the objective and functioning of an organization, which can be best explained with the help of a somewhat rustic example. Suppose we have a Malaria Eradication Task Force. Now, if its declared objective is a true one, i.e., if the sponsors expect the Force to really eradicate malaria and would hold it accountable if it did not, then the Task Force, irrespective of any deficiency that it may initially have in its personnel or structure or methodology of functioning, will so orient these during its functioning as to render them ideally suited to achieving its aim. If on the other hand the declared objective is not a serious one, i.e., if the sponsors would as well accept some budget expenditures and pompous reports in its place, then the Force, even if it has a most ideal structure and management methodology to start with, will so adapt these during its functioning as not only to fail to eradicate malaria but to attain maximum individual self-interest for its participants (of course,

graded according to their hierarchical position).

This then is the basic first hypothesis, viz., that *public-sector science in India does not have a genuine objective* and therefore the structure and management situation within these institutions are naturally oriented to achieving maximum individual self-interest. And this is what is reflected in the frustrations and politicking mentioned above.<sup>7</sup> This point can now be examined in detail.

**T**he question then is: does Indian science and technology have an objective? On paper, yes. It is clearly enunciated that the objective of India's science and technology is to bring about a self-reliant industrial and economic development of the country. But it is our contention that this is either a fake or an unattainable objective in the present circumstances.

Science and technology have often been described as the key to India's development. This is evidently a wrong premise because science and technology by themselves cannot do anything. They become a productive force only when they are used in the industrial and production system of a country. If they are not so used, neither will good technology develop, nor, even if a few stray ones emerge, will they have any value. So the development and the use of science and technology are actually decided by the interests controlling the *economy* of a country. To understand the above hypothesis, therefore, we must understand the *state of the economy* of the coun-

7. It should be noted here that a laboratory belonging to a private industry would have a clearly defined objective, viz., the maximization of profit of the company. If the company is efficient, and if it really needs research (rather than just for prestige), the laboratory would surely so orient its structure and functioning as to achieve that objective. Therefore, the possible efficient functioning of a few stray laboratories of this kind, if any, does not in any way disprove the above proposition. Whether the efficient functioning of these private laboratories serves any real interest of the Indian people, however, is a different matter.

try and the dominant interests that control it.

b) *Economy in bondage*: The development of capitalism—run by the engine of science and sheltered in the house of free enterprise—led inevitably to colonialism, where the economic interests of a politically and technologically advanced country drew its nourishment by exploiting a colony as a source of raw material and labour and as a market for its finished goods. The colonies have now gone but not the basic economic urge that led to them.

The world is still divided into technologically advanced and backward countries as at the time of colonialism. The urge of the economic vested interests of the former to utilize the latter as before could not have just vanished into thin air. So we have what is called neo-colonialism—the same economic process minus the political superstructure. The economic methodology also has undergone change to suit the prevailing socio-political circumstances. Overt pillage is replaced by investment, collaboration and 'aid'. Import of finished commodities, which will offend nationalist feelings, is replaced by import of technology, the engineering means of production and other key components, which generally go unnoticed by laymen.

At the same time, a value system is fostered by infiltrating the world of 'culture', whereby a strong demand is created for sophisticated goods having no relation whatsoever to the country's basic needs. And in the process of free collaboration and competition, with the gap between the local and external technology, the local commercial interests find no way of competing with these external forces and hence tend to survive by collaborating with them and acting as their local agents to the detriment of the interest of the local people.

**T**his is the economic process that is going on in all underdeveloped countries that have adopted the system of a 'free

society'.<sup>8</sup> (Those who want to get out of this economic system are of course branded as thugs and given a dose of civilizing education through bombs.)

India is no exception. The emphasis in the economic scene is still on mobilisation of and approach to raw materials which are then exported either as such or after minor processing in India (vide the mineral resources, the metallic ores in particular). The other major sources of export earnings are still plantation or similar products (tea, jute, etc.) whose world prices continue to decline every year. The production that goes on in the industrial sphere, whether in the public or private sector, is mostly wedded to the technology, the engineering components, and various forms of economic controls of foreign vested interests either in the form of commercial ventures (investment or collaboration) or in the form of 'aid'. Whatever exports of these materials do take place are controlled by the foreign collaborator in respect to their destinations and their price and volume, the object mostly being either to control the market in another undeveloped country (by utilizing our innocent name) or to get a material manufactured for the foreign collaborator's home market at a lower cost by utilizing the cheap labour available here.<sup>9</sup>

The other component of industrial development, viz., a deter-

mined effort to root out the vestiges of feudalism and to increase the purchasing power of the common people in rural areas where 80 per cent of India's people live, and without whose prosperity and improvement in purchasing power no real industrial development can be supported, is still absent. What the new agricultural technology has done is only to convert it, in line with the urban norm, into a capitalist, fiercely competitive agriculture, wherein a new small class of terribly affluent rural elite is emerging, driving the remaining masses to destitution.<sup>10</sup> This is an interesting paradox: capitalism arose by doing the landed interest in its own country to death, but it props up the landed gentry as an ally when it goes to prowl in another country.

The emphasis of the industrial sphere again is definitely on glamorous consumer goods, meant for a small rising section of the affluent middle class, sedulously fostered by the vested interests, rather than on products and processes which meet the basic needs of the people or which produce wealth. Hence also the emphasis on marketing, on promotional activities, on costing and such other unproductive activities which never themselves create any wealth—except that this distributes a part of the booty to a small group of deluded second-line parasites to ensure the safety of the process.

The true impact of this 'development' process has been brought out by a number of contemporary studies, particularly that of Dandekar and Rath.<sup>11</sup> This has stunningly brought out that the benefit of whatever development that is occurring is going to the

economically privileged sections of the society (in direct proportion to their economic status), and that the deprived sections have either not benefited at all or are becoming actually more impoverished. What is more, roughly 40 per cent of the entire Indian population has a per-capita consumption expenditure insufficient even for the basic minimum calorie needs of the human organism—and this situation has not changed after one decade of development although moderate to substantial benefit has accrued to the economically prosperous sections during the same period.

This is the background of India's economic and industrial effort today. In this process of industrialization, there is neither any growth of a self-reliant industrial development nor any benefit to the Indian people as such. The benefit goes to foreign interests, their local agents, and a small group of parasitic elite. And indigenous R&D remain starved by being denied application, except for minor help in the parasitic production process.<sup>12</sup>

What role can Indian R&D play in this economic context? The futility of Indian R&D is really the futility of India's economic and political scene. Unless we break the hold of neo-colonialism on the country and develop *swadeshi*, a self-reliant industrial economy in the interest of the Indian people as a whole, Indian R&D cannot have any useful role.

And if R&D does not have a clear commitment to a defined objective, the conditions in the laboratories cannot but remain pernicious so far as the needs of

8. See (a) Wheelwright, E. L., 'Historical appraisal: Colonialism past and present,' *Eastern Horizon*, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 6, No. 2, p. 45 (1969); (b) Kreye, Otto, 'Some remarks on the lasting stagnation in developing countries,' *Stadium Generale*, 22 (June 1969). (c) Examples of Neo-colonialism, with particular reference to India, appear regularly in *CSIR-SWA Courier*, the monthly newsletter of the CSIR Scientific Workers Association.

9. An excellent discussion and much data on the infiltration of foreign technology in our industrial sphere is available in *Seminar*, No. 131 ('Foreign Technology,' Sept. 1970); also in Subramanian, K. K., 'Foreign collaboration, monopoly and public policy in India' (paper presented in the National Seminar referred to in footnote 1b). However, the true meaning of the matter will be lost if it is

viewed merely as a passive process of technology import rather than as the viable tip of an active process of economic domination.

10. See Joshi, P. C., 'Rural base and power,' *Seminar*, No. 137, p. 38 (Jan. 1971); 'Agricultural policy,' *Seminar*, No. 143, p. 21 (July 1971); and other references cited therein.

11. Dandekar, V. M. and Rath, Nilakantha, 'Poverty in India,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, Bombay 1971

12. For a moving appeal to the underdeveloped countries to keep the political and economic context in mind while planning their R & D, see the *enfant terrible* of Indian science, late D. D. Kosambi's address to the CAAUST Symposium (*Seminar*, No. 82, p. 13, June 1966). Although he could not possibly have systematized the subject matter as much as we can do now, the address is remarkable for its ideological might and depth of feeling.

R & D are concerned,<sup>13</sup> and cannot but be bent to serve other substituted aims—namely, the aim of individual self-interests.

(c) *Alienation of scientists*: This common aim of self-interest brings us to the third hypothesis which concerns the social character and the value system of the Indian middle class and intellectuals, including the scientists, today.

**W**e are generally unaware, but a value system of self-interest has indeed been sedulously and very calculatedly fostered in the society by the economic vested interests. The idea simply is to distribute a small part of the booty among a not too large but not too small section of people in the guise of development activity, so that they will identify these benefits as due to a process of development to which they themselves are supposedly contributing and hence will support this economic superstructure.

The type of posts advertised by commercial interests (engineers, accountants, marketing adviser, sales manager, on fabulous salary compared to the niggardly pay offered to those who really run the wheels of industry); the banal and vulgar advertisements for consumer goods in the daily press (the unruffled suit, the dreamy look, the 'long affair', why mummy's bathroom does not stink, the spin spin Spin-H); the emphasis on promotional activity, on the glamorous touch in everything; the tremendous 'cultural' value of a foreign gadget, a fine carpet, a smuggled bottle, in fact of *anything* that is expensive; the banal topics that 'intellectuals' usually discuss when they meet at home—all tell a tale of the nature of 'development' and the corrupted value system which has been

made to grip the society. The conspicuous consumption, the 'vulgar pump', and the intuitive reflex of grabbing are not aberrations (as naively tried to be made out) but common norms of behaviour.<sup>14</sup>

There is in fact a clear social alienation of the intellectuals and the prosperous middle class from the masses. This has been aptly brought out in a recent United Nations report.<sup>15</sup> These two live in two entirely different worlds—different in living standards, in aspirations, in 'culture', in social customs, in education, in opportunities, in language, in *every thing*. These are the same *Bhadralok* (gentry 'respectable') and *Chhotolok* ('lowly', 'uncultured') classes of yesteryear,<sup>16</sup> with the *Bhadraloks* rendered more vulgar and mercenary by the various economic opportunities of 'development', almost all gains of which naturally come to them (other than the primary economic interests). Words like nation, country, people have meaning only to these *Bhadraloks*—and that meaning includes only themselves.

**S**cientists, as part of this prosperous middle class, are no exception to the above rule. Not only that, they are clearly utilizing their vantage position of professional expertise as a special leverage to further their individual and clan interests. The signs of this are many.

There is an unmistakable sign that the Indian scientific worker,

at any rate the middle and top echelons of it, is persevering and aspiring to catch up with and dislodge the entrenched administrative class as the first among the parasitic affluent middle class. This is reflected in the demand being raised by scientist elites, backed by deluded plebeians (and encouraged by clever politicians), to replace the administrators by technology people in the government's affairs and to raise their status and salary to the level of the former. This is of course rationalized by saying that it is the technical people who can provide the expertise for the development projects and that their subordination either in status or in salary to the administrators is what hinders development. (In this salary comparison, incidentally, the comparison is always restricted to the top all-India administrative services, scrupulously avoiding the vast masses of ministerial staff whose salaries and perquisites are really pitiable in comparison.)

What is ignored in this naive argument is that development is not brought forth by individuals or technical expertise but ideology, by the political and economic objective; and that if the objective is given, and if certain individuals came in the way, they would surely be replaced by the force of the objective itself. Actually, this demand is nothing but that we too should share in the loot and be elevated in the hierarchy. If the interest was genuinely for development, instead of asking for being elevated to the status of the administrators, we would have denounced this hierarchical structure as being totally opposed to any concept of development.

**A**gain, science today has become a big business. It has lots of amenities and perquisites. There are seminars and workshops where one can go and taste delicate hospitality, including intoxicants in parties thrown in by crafty merchants in posh hotels. There is the possibility and real aspiration of going abroad so that we can

13. This aspect has been beautifully presented, probably for the first time, by Dr. Amiya Kumar N. Reddy ('The brain drain', *Deccan Herald*, 10 and 17 May 1970), where he argued that good management was not a matter of learned discourse but only evolved out of a need. But the same author later ('A phase transformation approach to the management of scientific research laboratories', paper presented in the National Seminar cited in footnote 11) gave a discourse on an abstruse theory of laboratory management.

14. This point has been very movingly discussed by Sham Lal ('Planning perspectives. II. A corrupted elite', *Times of India*, 21 May 1971). However, it should be realized that mere denigration will not change this value system, nor does the answer lie in 'self-sacrifice' or 'spiritualization' as is often mentioned by many well-meaning leaders, but in a conscious realization of the economic forces that underlie it.

15. '1970 Report on the world social situation. Addendum I. Social development in Asia', UN Economic & Social Council, Commission for Social Development, 22nd Session (1971).

16. Sinha, Surajit and Bhattacharya, Ranjit, '*Bhadralok* and *Chhotolok* in a rural area of West Bengal', *Sociological Bulletin*, Vol. 18, No. 1 p. 50 (Mar. 1969). See also the book cited in footnote 2.

not only taste affluence but also bring in a part of it. There is also the possibility of getting a nice foreign gadget through the help of a friend who is going abroad, and of being nominated to committees, of coming in contact with key men in government and industry, of acting as an expert in national and international forums—which all bring in real benefits in concrete terms. These have become today the real perquisites of a scientific career which are treated as natural, and which one does not feel the need even to reflect upon.

**T**he self-interest of the scientists is also brought out by the projects and perspective plans that are proposed for their departments, which are invariably studded with suitable posts in the higher grades. The accompanying projects are there more to justify the proposed posts rather than the posts justifying the projects.

The same is also shown by the continuous refrain of the scientists in top position, backed by deluded lower-level aspirants, that the resources made available to science by the country are not sufficient, that the share of GNP allotted to science is a mere 0.4 per cent and must be raised to at least 1 per cent for any real development of the country to occur. The fallacy here, as elsewhere, is in identifying the advancement of oneself or one's clan as advancement of the country at large.

Not only that. The self-interest of scientists is also driving them to act unwittingly as active tools in the hands of foreign interests for subverting the country's interest. Foreign funds systematically make subtle inroads into the cultural and academic spheres to create a congenial climate for the spread of their economic process.<sup>17</sup>

17. Satish Saberwal and others splendidly discussed the role of foreign funds in social science research in India ('Academic Colonialism', *Seminar*, No. 112, Dec. 1968). However, they noted only (a) the misutilization of such research findings for foreign strategic and intelligence purposes and (b) the resulting intellectual subjugation. What they and many others miss is the tremendous role of such research (i) in fostering an affluent elite class philosophy oriented to ideas of

In the sphere of technology, this takes the form of sponsoring a research project either for 'modernization' of a traditional industry or for meeting a felt or newly invented 'need'. With the lure of abundant laboratory facilities, of foreign fellowships and travels, and offer of national and international 'expert' positions, the scientists not only fall an easy prey to these projects but are also subtly led to support the intended processes through their 'research findings'. The findings or the 'new methods' that are developed are of course not really material. What the foreign interests need is a show of research findings and the 'cultural acceptance' of the project or process—after which the technology and the means of production come as usual through collaboration agreements from abroad.

It is not suggested that all these are done with conscious design. It is something like what an anthropologist friend of mine said about the criminal tribes, who are so brought up from their childhood that when they lift a neighbour's cattle, they do not consider it in any way an unworthy act. To the scientists, the 'tools of social and economic transformation', too, without knowing it, the society or economy has become incidental, present there only to provide the rationale, but the real attractions are the benefits of the profession itself—and the politics come only for the 'equitable distribution' of these benefits and perquisites.

**T**hese are the factors that characterize the state of science and the undercurrents of poli-

'modernization' and 'development', and (ii) in creating a favourable climate for the acceptance of a certain type of sophisticated industrial production norm among the intelligentsia who are the dominant pressure group in the society. Only this explains the mushroom growth of social science and management institutes in the country (largely foreign financed) during the last decade or so. The institutes of technology, the recently started agricultural universities, and the liberal endowment of foreign funds to established research institutions are doing the same thing in the field of science and technology.

tics in science in India. It is evident that this state will continue till the Indian people take a social, political and economic decision to free the Indian economy of foreign interests and their collaborators, and to usher in a self-reliant industrial development of the country in the interest of the Indian society as a whole. Till that time, science and technology will continue to remain barren, and politics in scientific institutions will be confined to merely tugging at the power sources for individual self-interest.

**I**f the ultimate solution is contained in the above statement, the question is how to bring it about. The first point to realize is that the scientific workers themselves cannot bring about this transformation, nor can they generate enough pressure for the economic interests to concede it. This change can be brought about only by the people at large.

But, then, no one can know as well as the scientist about the tremendous potentialities of science and technology for their poor country on the one hand and the real pitfalls and obstacles in its path on the other. So it is the scientists' responsibility to educate the lay public about the real source of their suffering and the bright future that can be achieved otherwise. This is the historic role of a scientific workers' movement in today's underdeveloped countries.

Of course, with the corrosive influence of the prevailing value system, with the systematic training of only two primordial reflexes: grabbing food and avoiding danger, with the attempt at vague 'culturalization' of all issues by the few scientist 'progressives', it will not be easy to develop such a movement. Nor, even if developed, can it easily satisfy or mollify or transform the elemental aspirations of its members before it can address itself to its ultimate task.

But such has always been the case in history, and history has always solved such apparently insurmountable problems.

# Many facets

K. J. SHAH

THOSE who argue against academic politics (the academics' participation in university politics) do so for different reasons. They do so because they do not want rivals or partners, or they think it is not in the best Indian tradition, or in the best Oxbridge tradition, or because it is not their job, or they feel that it involves heavy risks.

The rejection of academic politics on these grounds is debatable. In any case those who are aware of the manner in which power is exercised in our universities, and academic institutions, and the impossible pass to which education has been brought, are not worried about the legitimacy of politics, nor of its necessity. Unless we want complete and explicit chaos, it is necessary that something should be done about the present situation.

The problem is: Is it possible and how? Is it possible to work out a purposeful change in the university system, and, if it is, how? In order to consider these questions, we must understand the power situation and its sources in the university system.

In the first section, I point out how the exercise of power in the

various contexts—an important one like the appointment of the academic staff, or an unimportant one like the getting of stationery—is not governed by any rules, (I am not concerned with the rules in the rule-book, but rules followed in practice) is essentially arbitrary; and as such, it is a system, if such arbitrariness could constitute a system at all, of humiliations for those governed by it. I also point out that the victim of the system can do precious little to alter the system except to protest against it generally at a heavy personal cost.

In the second section, I point out that the academic community is inherently weak for any significant action because academic activities have not been decolonialised, and they lack relevance and strength. For this not only the academic community, but the entire society is responsible.

In the third and the last section I suggest some possible action. In respect of both the administrative structure and the perspective of academic work, I think that it is in the departments that the hope

K. Raghavendra Rao has assisted in the preparation of this paper.

and the possibility of an effective beginning lie. In case this cannot be done on a sufficiently large scale, it will be impossible to avoid further worsening of the chaos in our education.

In the first section we are to consider how power is exercised to achieve, sometimes under the guise of educational ends, personal ends. It is true that sometimes a well-meaning but unintelligent person may imagine that he is pursuing really educational ends but the intelligent administrator is quite aware of what is happening. It must be pointed out that the account given here is neither exhaustive nor invariable. The pattern of the subversion of educational ends varies according to time and circumstances.

Let us begin by considering the exercise of power at one of the focal points in the educational system—the appointment of the academic staff (I am not concerned with all the aspects of such appointments, but only some aspects which bring out the manner in which power is exercised). There are not very infrequent complaints about the appointments having been influenced by extra-academic considerations like region, community, religion, etc. Sometimes the communal or the regional influences operate blatantly, but very often there is a plausible academic cloak to cover these influences.

For example I know, directly or indirectly, that both the following comments are made at selection committee meetings; even at the same meeting for an interview for the same job: 'We know what a Ph. d. is worth these days'; or when it suits some that 'some person has very good qualifications, unfortunately he has no research experience'. These comments could be right, but they are made independently of any explicit or implicit reference to the nature of the qualification of the particular candidate being considered. With

such weapons it is easy to arrive at the right (I) decision in favour of a particular individual.

If instead of this, sometimes mechanical criteria in terms of formal qualifications are adopted, it is not done to achieve better appointments. It is well known that the reliability of our formal qualifications is very low. Very often a mechanical criterion is adopted to avoid a power struggle, and sometimes to achieve the results one wants. One is happy though to be able to maintain a facade.

Suppose that one is able to overcome these difficulties—the unreliability of the formal qualifications and the arbitrariness of the fluctuating, varying evaluations of the formal qualifications—one may imagine that now one has succeeded in relating the appointment to the academic needs. This is true, but only as far as it goes, and it does not go far enough.

To ensure the selection of a competent person is not to secure his functioning in the department. Let me explain: To frustrate purposeful functioning at this stage, one of the commonest devices used is to appoint persons with different sub-specialisations in the same department. But is this not desirable?

Before we think so, let us consider: suppose in the Department of Physics one appoints a nuclear physicist and radio-physicist. Most often the departments are small and the resources limited. To equip a department for a single branch is enormously expensive. When there are two or more branches, there are bound to be difficulties. The administrator will be brought into the picture; there will be recriminations and the usual frustrations. In the absence of a democratic functioning of the department, the difficulty is likely to arise in one way or another; but this is the sort of difficulty which is not taken notice of. The more intelligent among the administrators are aware of this possi-

bility and utilise it to the fullest to secure their own dominance.

This sort of device has also an academic cloak. The tacit and unexamined assumptions are that the more departments a university has, the better it is for the university; the more branches of study a department has, the better. Both these assumptions presuppose that we have an idea of what a viable department or a viable branch of study in a department is. However this is not so.

But the really important feature of the situation is not that at vital points power is manipulated without reference to real academic purposes. The important feature of the situation is that the absence of intelligible rules and the presence of arbitrariness are ubiquitous. I think it is necessary to mention some of these, not to drive the point home, but merely as a matter of record.

(i) Take the case of a facility like providing a steno-typist-cum-secretary to a department. After all these years, one would have thought that our universities would have recognised this need. On the other hand, one finds in several quarters a strange resistance against recognising this need. I have heard a V.C. remark, not altogether seriously but not altogether humourously either, that if a steno-typist is given to each department, he would receive many more letters from the departments. I was surprised to find resistance to this even among high U.G.C. officials, who seriously said that the suggestion should not be made because it was not very likely to be accepted (when stated, it sounds curious; otherwise this principle is very commonly followed. Before making a demand, we orally confirm that the demand will be granted!).

This resistance has several sources: (a) It is not realised that in the case of the humanities and the social sciences, the steno-typist is indispensable for experimental drafts; (b) The absence of adequate and/or competent office assistance makes the head of the

department utilise his other colleagues as clerical staff (some of the heads do enjoy it so!). This certainly is not meant to generate good relations between the members of a department; and (c) the administration is very keen on seeing that steno-typists are not appointed when they have no legitimate work. One wishes they would be equally keen on seeing that the services of so many highly qualified teachers are not lost to clerical competence. Connected with this is the fact that having a steno is a status-symbol.

(ii) Minor rewards of academic life—examinerships, assignments for supervision or invigilation, membership of inspection committees and other committee, etc., are once again not governed by any rules. In many universities there is a committee to appoint paper-setters and examiners, but there is no such committee for the appointment of the invigilators. It is the personal equation that matters; and the academic in search of some extra-remuneration, naturally, does not come out with his dignity intact and his reputation untarnished.

(iii) The same sorts of difficulties exist in the matter of leave, lien, research facilities and grants. There are no rules, and very often rules are changed so as to adversely affect the claims of the particular individual whose case is being considered. This is hardly fair, but who cares? How could one doubt the sincerity and judgement of those in whom is placed the destiny of a university! (iv) To come to comparative trivialities: Is one entitled to a house? Is he entitled to a room in the faculty buildings? What furniture can he have? After nearly two decades of their existence after the attainment of independence our universities have no rules governing these facilities. These are matters for personal favour, or almost so.

Through the entire fabric of university life, in matters small and matters big, there are no rules, and there are no policies. Arbitrariness and ad-hoc-ism are

the order of the day. It is not surprising that the university comes to have the atmosphere of a petty court.

In this situation tale-bearing is a normal occurrence. The amount varies according to the nature of the particular persons carrying the tale and the persons to whom the tales are carried. Any disagreement or criticism, sometimes even a suggestion, is regarded as a personal attack. All criticism at any level is muffled—directly or indirectly.

The effect on the student community is considerable. From the behaviour of their teachers they draw their own conclusions about how to get along and get on.

Thus there is no politics of policy or policies, but politics only of personal ends and personalities. Politics is only intrigue, not at the periphery of political activity, but at its centre.

In this context, any attempt to alter the situation is likely to assume the character of intrigue whatever may be the intentions of the protesting party. In the absence of a convention of dissent, there are no normal channels of expressing or conveying dissent—say, in any form like a teachers' council or departmental meetings and so on. The dissent therefore has a tendency to take a form which itself is often thought of as objectionable not only by the authorities but also by the others. The assumption is that the authorities can hurt by their actions, but we should always be careful of their feelings! For any dissent or protest, there will be no support from colleagues, one will have to go it alone.

This is often to invite at least a series of pinpricks, and at its worst, dismissal—a sort of martyrdom, with no tears shed for a fool. I think, any ruler of a petty princely state could not have hoped for greater suzerainty or greater absolute or unchallenged power. It is not surprising that the Vice-Chancellor of a univer-

sity good-humouredly accepted that power is power only when it can be used arbitrarily or erratically to harm or to benefit persons without relation to a person's competence.

It may happen that in such a situation, there may be some relieving features. There may be a person or a department which will have no difficulties of the sort mentioned above. But the apparent exception is really no exception; such a case only completes the picture. The princely autocrats—whatever they might be called—have always had favourites for whom only the sky is the limit for favours, of course, only so long as they remain favourites. But the favourite is neither able, nor willing, to institutionalise the advantages he enjoys and extend them either to his colleagues in the other departments, or even to his successor.

It might be said that this picture of the functioning of our universities is overdrawn. I do not think that it is; on the contrary, I know of more than one university in whose case my account would not do sufficient justice.

In the previous section, we have seen how power operates in our system and how it is difficult to work for a change in the manner of operation. So far as the academic is concerned, whatever his character, he is too weak. But how is it that the academic, who ought to be the pivot of the university, is so hopelessly weak and helplessly weak? The explanation lies not only in the political set up.

Whatever the political set up, the academician should have been able to gain leverage from the relevance and the strength of the academic effort. However, it is the lack of relevance and strength in the academic effort that provides leverage for the continued existence of the unsatisfactory political relationships in the academic community.

One significant feature of our academic life is the continued



acceptance of a colonial status in our work. The implications of this for our academic work were considered in an earlier issue of *SEMINAR*. But it has implications for relations between academics which are of far-reaching importance. In fact, this situation confuses and messes up these relationships.

**L**et us see how academic colonialisation operates with reference to academic life and relationships within the country. First, it vitiates the possibilities of a common pursuit. This could be more easily seen in the case of a subject like sociology or social anthropology or philosophy. Persons with different foreign trainings compete to sell the relevance of their training techniques and problems which have arisen out of the existential and intellectual situation in other countries. When philosophers, for example, try to modernise philosophy through such diverse approaches as existentialism, phenomenology and linguistic analysis, a common pursuit will be a long way away.

Second, this kind of situation vitiates the teacher student relationship. Every good student, especially the best student, instead of being an asset to the teacher is an asset to some one abroad. If it is argued that on his return he could be an asset to the teacher: it seems not to have been realised that once a student goes abroad he finds his teacher at home out of date, as one who did not teach the student what he should have here. He not only feels not obliged, he is alienated from the teacher. And he wants to keep up with what is going on abroad and not react to what is going on at home.

Third, more disastrous than the last, are the consequences for those who are in India—whether they have or have not gone abroad. With the focus of problems and techniques from abroad, each one and especially those who have been abroad or who are desiring to go abroad try to 'keep pace'. This involves a movement away

from the base and towards the intellectual centres abroad. Those in Dharwar and Kolhapur look up to Bombay and Delhi, and those in Bombay and Delhi look up to Harvard and Cambridge. This is one of the aspects of 'keeping pace with "progress"!'. This means absence of local orientation.

Apart from anything else, this is a frustrating pursuit. Our resources simply do not permit us to have the library let alone the equipment necessary for such keeping up. But this kind of approach is hardly calculated to produce—to generate the cooperative or friendly attitudes in the different members of the community. Each higher rung leaves the lower ones severely alone to fend for themselves and through their own resources. On the one hand there is disdain for those who are not as up-to-date as oneself; on the other, there is jealousy of those who are able to have the resources to be up-to-date. There is mutual alienation and silent mutual resistance and/or neglect.

**F**our, the most disastrous consequence of the situation is the irrelevance of academic activity to our problems. In the first instance there is a tendency to emphasise either western problems or Indian problems which are more relevant in the western context—e.g., the emphasis on the sociology of caste as against the sociology of the sect. Or, for example, a thesis on Wittgenstein's influence on contemporary philosophy restricts itself to England and would not make any attempt to evaluate Wittgenstein's influence on contemporary Indian philosophy!

This situation is doubly suitable to the Indian academician; it enables him to maintain his contacts abroad; and it prevents his coming into conflict with either the administrator or the politician.

Some years ago I found it impossible to persuade a friend of mine to measure the waste in our student messes because he was afraid that the warden or wardens who happened to be powerful would not like the idea. Certainly

a study of the history of the university or of the sociology of the campus would have both great academic and great practical value. These and similar subjects are avoided for fear of offending the authorities; and if some one were ready to work on these topics, he may not be permitted by the university authorities for fear of mischief.\*

The result, in any case, is a great academic loss, in ways too numerous to be mentioned. This may enable the different groups to live at peace with one another; but the peace would be superficial and it is bought at a heavy price. If I am right, then through the relevance and strength of the academic work, the academic community is not likely to gain strength and leverage.

**B**efore I close this section, I must consider the charge that is often made that in respect of academic colonialism the party to be mostly, if not wholly, blamed is the academician. It is said that nobody prevents the academician from changing the focus of his studies. Of course, but in bringing this about there are enormous difficulties. The acceptance of any change is extremely difficult: in the case of a well-established big institution, there are too many strong persons and interests to be persuaded; in the case of a small institution, even when the change is accepted, execution becomes difficult through paucity or lack of resources.

I shall not go into the details of the problems of steering any change through the relevant bodies of the university; and the problems of adjustment in the department. In all these problems, the share of those who administer, is not inconsiderable.

What is more important, is the influence the authorities exercise in the direction of colonialism.

\*Here we might prevent a possible misunderstanding—the assumption that the western liberal university permits it. It does not, and that is why all the campus violence in the West. But we still need to note the distinctive Indian quality of our fate!

For example, despite everything, a visit to the United States is indeed useful if not necessary in securing a promotion. It was the report of a foreign professor that led to an investigation which resulted in the closure of a department in a university. Before that, a large number of complaints from reputed Indian academics did not lead to any action.

Is it any wonder that the focus continues to be strongly West-centred as ever? It is wrong therefore to think that only the academicians are to blame for this West-centredness. It is to create a structure pointing in a particular direction—and then to ask the individual to take things in the opposite direction at great personal loss and risk! It is to arrange things so as to create opportunities for heroes!

From the foregoing, we can see the tremendous difficulties of the task of bringing about a purposeful change in the situation. If we had no arbitrariness in administration, we could have pooled our experiences together in a common forum and we could have spotted and dealt with the question of the right perspective in our studies. (And we would not have regarded examinations, etc., as our central issues in education.). If we had a correct perspective, the confidence of a job well done would have given us courage enough to resist the arbitrariness of administration. (This is indeed a large assumption to make. Even if it is not true, independently of what contribution it could make to the improvement of the administrative set up, the problem of attaining a correct perspective in our academic activities is very important in itself).

In order to deal with the arbitrariness of administration we do not get any help from the relevance and strength of academic work. In fact, the arbitrariness and ad-hocness of administration and the lack of relevance and strength in academic work are mutually supported and strengthened by each other. The network of relationships is very complex and strong

—almost to the point of invulnerability, if not actually invulnerable.

The system, it would seem, cannot be reformed or mended on a sufficiently large scale to become the beginning of a revolution. If that is so that system must break from within: (a) through the stresses and strains within the system itself, or (b) through some one enjoying high power within or without the university system; or from without on account of external pressures and violence.

To imagine that it would yield to any peaceful effort is to expect a miracle. I do not expect it. But then one cannot wait either for a revolution or a miracle. So I shall take it that the system which is apparently invulnerable is after all not so invulnerable, and it is possible to do something. If so, what can we do?

Let us take the problem of arbitrariness in administration. To tackle it at the level of an entire university is, on the one hand, too large a task requiring the cooperation of so many; and, on the other hand, in relation to the society at large, it is too small a task and it cannot withstand the pressures from the larger society nor can it avoid the attentions of a larger society. Perhaps a department is a suitable unit, to attempt to build up something which will be academically and administratively viable. It would need all the imagination and intelligence, that one can put into it. And may be a department is too small to attract notice.

May I point out that it is wrong to imagine that only the head of the Department can be the villain of the piece; the non-heads could equally be so. What would be required therefore would be team spirit. No doubt it is difficult, but may be it could be achieved. In any case it will bring out the possibilities and limitations of such change. Such departmental functioning will be much too formal and ineffective if it is not concerned with the substance of teaching and research and is thus

concerned with the problems of the perspective of academic work.

Much less than the problem of administration, the problem of perspective can be treated at a general level. The general direction of the perspective hardly illumines what needs to be done in a particular course. This again is a sort of problem that can be tackled competently only at the departmental level. To treat it in an overall fashion would involve too much work.

But such departmental changes could affect the general picture, only if they are not uncommon and if they are not unrelated. The problem of relating these changes is twofold—one, it is a problem of communication, and, two, it is a problem of change in the attitudes and practices of the academic community. And this, once again is enormously difficult. Though the U.G.C. has provided for the exchange of teachers (not only for a fortnight or so, but for a term or a year) between Indian universities, it has been unable to evoke any response.

In several seminars and meetings, I have suggested that an academician who goes abroad for a term or more, should not be permitted to go again unless he spends a term in one of our newer universities. The shoulder this suggestion has received is not merely cold, it is icy cold. There seems to be no honourable way of breaking the isolation of academics at different levels.

It seems that the resources that we have for change, on an effectively large scale, are just not there. If somehow or other, we can muster these resources, we may be able to avoid the visible chaos, or at least to guide it when it comes. If for one reason or another, for lack of coverage, or lack of vision, or the strength of the opposing forces, we fail to move decisively and in the right direction; the alternative before us is complete chaos without the vision to guide it to a better future. It is not a very inviting prospect, but certainly it is a challenging one.

# The search for purpose

SEMINARIST

THE poser is persuasive in arguing that the conduct of intra-academic politics is inevitable—whether furtive, of the palace intrigue sort, or open, with institutionalized participation; furthermore, it has to be made legitimate, though some styles of conducting it may not be. The limits of its argument do not allow it to consider the pre-requisites for acquiring this legitimacy, both for the academic domain itself and for the participative management of power within it. To these issues this argument is addressed; in the process, the focus changes somewhat.

Let us distinguish between (1) the academic system which creates, evaluates, stores, and transmits knowledge, and (2) the performance system, concerned with the production of various other kinds of goods, services, and values; the two systems do overlap to some extent. The performance system has functioned in contemporary India at a low level of efficiency and productivity. If the targets for producing steel or coarse cloth or literates are missed by large margins, the matter is taken lightly: seldom is human failure separated from God's Will, and for this failure to distinguish, the price is paid by the community at large; or, more accurately, by its weakest sections, for the strong manage to grab on the swings what they may have missed on the roundabouts.

The academic system is in harmony with the performance system. The latter demands little of the former—except mass production of degree holders, regardless of quality. Subject only to quantitative demands, the academic system does not have to respond

to any qualitative controls—external or internal. It gets by nicely with low quality over-production both of scholars and of their works.

Suppose, however, that the *garibi hatao* elections of 1971 have generated significant pressures on the performance system for improving its levels of efficiency and productivity. There is no indication from those who preside over the performance system that they feel these pressures, but perhaps the necessary evidence will appear in time. Suppose, further, that the performance system will choose to respond to these pressures by transmuting them, in part, into qualitative demands on the academic system instead of turning to, say, foreign 'experts', technological imports, foreign collaboration and the like. Would we have the resources to meet the challenge?

This question does not admit of a yes or no answer. Meeting a challenge is a process of growth; and capacity grows as the effort is made. Let us consider, then, some of the circumstances which are likely to condition the effort in response to this challenge. Thus, for example, when the poser refers to Indian academics as being 'poverty stricken', the phrase makes sense only if they are compared with (1) non-Indian academics, especially in the industrialized countries (but also generally in Africa, where salary scales set initially for European university staff, etc., have not been adapted to the local income-ranges); or (2) the Indian non-academics—higher civil servants who employ abundant official resources for private purposes, company executives with generous

fringe benefits, successful professionals such as doctors and architects, etc.

The educational levels in these categories tend to be equivalent, and a large majority of academics—at least at one university that we know about<sup>1</sup>—is drawn from families belonging to these very social strata. Naturally, then, comparing himself with his kith and kin in these strata,<sup>2</sup> the academic succumbs to pity over his own poverty.

But surely, in India of all countries, where over 40 per cent of the population has a lower caloric intake than the minimum desirable, where 90 per cent of the population can spend per capita much less than Rs 100 per month,<sup>3</sup> surely we academics are affluent in relation to these very large and significant categories?

**T**he debilitating chain of consequences arising from the failure to recognize this elementary fact is formidable: (1) Having persuaded ourselves of our poverty when in fact we are affluent, we readily foresake our core academic tasks for all manner of peripheral work which pays extra—ranging from an excessive number of examiner-ships to intense involvement in, say, the share market.

(2) A variant on the above is to persuade westerners to give one a visiting appointment away from India: what one saves there is believed to be essential 'to provide for the wife and children.'

(3) Either of these alternatives can be available only to a small minority among the academics; in

any case, an academic order whose greatest prizes lie in visiting appointments outside the country cannot possibly inspire the great majority of academics nor the staff in the libraries, laboratories, administration, etc., who do not have this option.

(4) Consequently, the organization of our libraries remains chaotic, small cliques run—or, rather, sit on—our professional associations, and the scholarly infra-structure is non-existent.

(5) Rather than challenge our 'top flight' men, this situation serves as an additional excuse for a sojourn in North America 'to write my book,' in the process proclaiming to the world that we are incapable of doing our jobs at home.

(6) This attitude along with the desire to provide nicely for 'the wife and children' goes to subvert national institutions—such as the Simla Institute of Advanced Study—established precisely to enable the most productive scholars to write their books.

**T**his pursuit of personal welfare via the 'star system' sustained by the West has been compatible with (1) low levels of academic performance within the country and (2) absence of effective qualitative demands on the academia. Whether or not the situation is changing is ambiguous; but what are the levers available for change? A participative management of power, by spreading the 'say' in decision-making much wider, can reasonably be expected to ensure wider involvement in the academic processes; but much depends on the pattern of norms and sanctions governing the academic world at large. Where softness of purpose, absence of courage, and easy integrity constitute the governing norms, academic politics is likely to degenerate into a zero-sum game, absorbing much energy but lacking in academic relevance.

A strengthening of purpose, I submit, goes with a widening of concerns. Let me illustrate this

with reference to housing. The simplest sort of political manoeuvre is directed towards clear personal gain, in this case, allotment of university housing out of turn to oneself. But housing is short in universities overall, and therefore a worthier form of political action would be that which seeks an expansion in housing for the university community as a whole, faculty, other staff, students. This too amounts merely to the advancement of the sectional interests of a *part* of the community.

**T**he most honourable sort of politics in relation to housing, therefore, would be the formulation of plans and the generation of political pressure for expanding urban housing as such; the first and second purposes would inevitably be fulfilled as the third purpose is consummated, although this gratification would be delayed. In its relationship with the performance system, thus, the academic system would be a source of articulated demands on behalf of the community at large, not merely of degrees of uncertain utility. The Dandekar and Rath study of poverty, cited earlier, is an admirable piece of political intervention. It is only this sort of broadening of purpose that can save academic politics from the kind of zero-sum game, exemplified in the first case above, characteristic of many contemporary university communities.

To sum up: critical self-observation and self-analysis, continuous reflection over the norms most appropriate to academia and society, courage to defend these norms—and to challenge those who would corrupt or misuse them—despite substantial costs in cash and opportunity, a strengthening and broadening of purpose which should come easier by reference to the less privileged amongst us: this is the core of intellectuality. Attention to such concerns will make politics on the campus meaningful in areas other than that of self-advancement and, in so doing, will add to the stature of our calling.

1. Yogendra Singh, *Academic role structure and modernization: a study of university teachers*, mimeographed.

2. Boudhayan Chattopadhyay has etched with some acid the norms characteristic of these upper strata—and their consequences for the educational world. See his 'Marx and India's crisis', in *Hommage to Karl Marx* (ed. P. C. Joshi), 1969, Delhi: People's Publishing House, pp. 205-60.

3. V. M. Dandekar and Nilakantha Rath, 'Poverty in India,' *Economic & Political Weekly* 1971, vol. 6, pp. 25-48 and 106-46; my figures are from pp. 312 and 43 (table 3.6).

# The larger context

GIRIJA KUMAR

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THE issue of 'academic politics' cannot be treated in isolation as has sought to be done in the poser. The democratisation of decision-making processes in the academic sphere or, in other words, the introduction of participatory democracy as an essential ingredient of our academic culture should not be considered in a vacuum. It

is only one facet of the several that complete the whole.

1. Participation of the academics in political decision-making through direct involvement in political activity or by association with the administrative machinery;

2. Decision-making through participatory democracy in academic institutions at the level of professional organizations, academic and executive councils, staff and student councils, departmental committees and general bodies consisting of students, teachers and the administrative staff;

3. The art of politicking in essentially what are termed academic matters.

**T**he poser concentrates on the second facet, that too in an imprecise fashion, to the exclusion of the other two. The democratisation of academic life without the same processes working in the political and social systems simultaneously is inconceivable. The academic community is no longer an island. Thus, the precondition for the success of democratisation in academic life rests within the larger context of the society as a whole. How far the democratic processes are at work in the country, what is the extent of participation of the academics in public life and how far the social system acts as the inhibiting factor to progress are relevant questions that cannot be brushed aside so lightly.

Again, by advocating participatory democracy in academic life in isolation, there is a grave danger of 'academic politics' being made an unabashed instrument of personal aggrandizement. The prevailing situation in several universities of the Hindi-speaking area in particular, has conclusively proved that the teachers themselves are not above undermining academic standards by being willing tools of sectional interests for purely personal interest. Indeed, in Uttar Pradesh there is a long Faustian tradition of selling

the academic 'soul' to the Mephistophelean politicians, one of them being an Ex-Chief Minister of the State, for a mess of pottage. Such patterns have now become an integral part of the academic culture to the extent that democratic processes in the universities are in danger of becoming convenient instruments of sectional interests on an all-India scale. This development is the logical consequence of political processes having already been vitiated by competing sectional interests without larger objectives in mind.

In the prevailing situation, the infusion of democratic institutions in academic life brings the added danger of legitimising competing sectional interests. Corroboration is already to be had from the actual state of affairs in several local colleges as a result of the recent injunction of democratic processes by the university authorities. Academic institutions are liable to become warring camps divided on personal, regional or caste basis. The division can hardly be on objective grounds for the simple reason that the universities are only a reflection in miniature of the society as a whole.

**T**he strident demand for more democracy has a universal ring and is completely justified on the face of it. The doubts begin to rise when probing is sought to be done under the surface. There is even an aura of artificiality about it because of its foreign genesis. Unfortunately, the demands for democratisation of academic life in India are modelled on what has happened in other parts of the world rather than being a true mirror of indigenous environment. The local requirements, potentialities or capability have been least thought out by the vanguard of this movement. Power for the sake of power seems to be the motto. The difficulty in copying is that, being a mechanical process, it tends to overlook the order of priority in a given situation. Moreover, there are special fea-

tures of academic life in developing societies that have no parallel in advanced capitalist societies. Thus, the tendency to find the easy way out by copying wholesale the measures of educational reform at Columbia, Yale or Harvard is liable to lead the country into a blind alley. The suspicion remains that such demands are an apologia for lack of objectives in the educational field.

The experimentation without defining objectives will prove nationally disastrous. A poor country like India can ill afford such luxuries. The risks are great when democracy in this country has come to be understood as a system bringing about results without the intake of any inputs. The best policy in the circumstances would be to define objectives and then plan for proper allocation of scarce resources for obtaining maximum results. To sum up, the democratic processes are relevant in our situation to the extent that they are utilitarian and help to raise the level of scholarship in the country.

The introduction of academic politics on a large scale is only a palliative because it does not touch the fundamental issues under dispute. When an unstable balance is disturbed and replaced by a low-level equilibrium, it creates more problems than solves them. Problems grow multifold when the inspiration for reform is external and the objectives are not clear. The frittering away of resources in this manner may result in pure and simple window dressing. Many so-called reforms in the educational system are illusory because the superstructure is not supported by the base.

**T**he Chinese alone in this part of the world have recognized that short of a radical transformation of the social system (that includes the academic world), academic politics and other reforms are meaningless. Whatever our other reservations about the cultural revolution, it was a fundamental

reform which sought to juxtapose the authority against the mass. The Chinese had a critical look at the base and then decided to cut out all peripheral institutions that were not relevant to their needs.

If we were to decide to do that, the results would be extremely interesting. A greater portion of our scientific establishment for instance, would have to go because it is either performing tasks already completed in other countries or conducting research on subjects not strictly relevant to the needs of this society. One clear instance of this type is the sophisticated computer equipment now installed in many academic institutions. At the present stage of development, such instrumentation has not much place in our scheme of things. This is borne out by the fact that such equipment is mostly underutilized.

The situation is similar with regard to many institutions of higher learning which are not relevant to our present needs and may have been established to provide information to foreign agencies exclusively or to a substantial extent. The institution of academic politics in such places is relevant only to the extent that the academics involved in them voluntarily decide to liquidate the institutions themselves. This is unlikely to happen. The introduction of democracy in such a situation will hardly make any difference. The prospects are frightening especially when it is realized that most of the institutions in the country would be covered by the categories mentioned above.

**V**iewed in this context, the problem of recognizing academic politics as a legitimate activity is a very contemporary one and thus does not require any elaborate historical backdrop for its justification. It is a sociological phenomenon that need not be explained in a historical context. The poser has talked at length about the tradition, in India, as a legacy of the colonial past, of keeping the academic issues and the use of power in

separate compartments. This is not entirely true. The advent of Gandhiji on the political scene was heralded by the boycott of British-supported educational institutions all over the country. The elaborate system of privately supported educational institutions in North India is the direct product of the politicization of education. The role played by the students and teachers of Eastern U.P. and Bihar during the 1942 movement needs no elaboration here.

The keen interest taken in academic politics in certain parts of the country is a result of the marriage of convenience between politics and the academic world. The leaders in the forefront, whatever their other failings or strong points, are very conscious of the uses and abuses of power. Banaras Hindu University is an instance of the kind. The intense politicization of the student body through their links with political parties is equally matched by low-level politicking by a substantial body of teachers. It is very doubtful whether the democratisation of decision-making in Banaras at present will improve the situation. Any elaborate change at this time will transmute the proper activity of academic politics into pure and simple politicking activity.

**T**hus, the intrusion of party politics and low-level politicking at personal level singly or in collusion with each other will play havoc with whatever is left of the academic traditions of the good old days. Multiply Banaras and you get a frightening prospect for the whole of India. Most of the educational reforms carried out in recent years are only on the surface and have very fundamentally upset the system of checks and balances so elaborately built up in the past. The intrusion of democracy, in order to be successful, must be on the basis of strict cost accounting. Who would bell the cat should be the next legitimate question!

The third section of the paper makes compelling reading because attempts are made therein to discuss fundamental issues of edu-

cational policy at the university level, by correlating inputs with outputs at the national level. It is only in this context that what is variously described as academic governance, participative management or democracy becomes relevant. Unfortunately, the basic questions are only touched upon lightly and their parameter in a purely Indian context is not elaborated. The most telling argument is about the irrelevance of the two Education Commission reports to the present situation. The point has been rightly made that the proposals with regard to the democratisation have their inspiration from the western experience.

**I**t may be pertinent at this stage to raise a number of fundamental questions relevant to the present situation, especially when a number of new academic institutions have been established or they are in the state of being born. Should participative management be introduced as an experimental measure in some of the newer institutions? Should it be restricted in the first instance to model universities which are to be planted like islands in an inhospitable landmass? The example of Jawaharlal Nehru University is pertinent in this context. Could Lin Piao's classic statement about the countryside surrounding and eventually enveloping the urban areas be reversed in this context? Could the 'red-brick' universities act in India like prairie fire in the words of the redoubtable Mao Tse-tung.

There is another school of thought that pins its faith in the established universities of Delhi, Bombay and Madras to act as catalytic agents in the process of democratisation because of their traditional standing in the academic world. These are elite universities whose influence has permeated the ethos of the ruled and ruling classes alike. It is claimed that the returns from the experimentation in academic governance in elite universities will be instantaneous and high as well. Delhi University and its affiliated

colleges have already established paraphernalia of an elaborate machinery in this direction. Whether the reformation will be a self-sustaining process or herald a counter-reformation remains to be seen. It would indeed be a miracle to assure success of such brave experiments in a generally deteriorating situation.

The third alternative is to turn the whole of India into a laboratory by opening up the floodgates of 80 and odd universities and several thousand colleges to experimentation. Such an attempt being of Don Quixotic proportions will result in a magnificent disaster for the simple reason that a social base with essentially static qualities will be unable to sustain the radical transformation in the unstable superstructure. It would be like the tail wagging the dog. Any change of such gigantic proportions must have a system of checks and counter-checks for assuring its success. The dilemma is very real for policy makers because of the few alternatives available to them. The dilemma arises precisely for the reason that we tend to advocate academic governance in a vacuum. To talk of radical transformation in a country with an essentially conservative ethos is sheer deception. As in hit-and-run tactics, success is only a matter of chance and not of futuristic planning.

The choice between several alternatives mentioned above may look very impressive on the surface but, in reality, the difference is no more than between tweedledum and tweedledee. Our social system is essentially authoritarian and has the stamp of the feudal behavioral pattern on it. Men and women who are essentially trained to view things within a limited framework and have not imbued the capitalist pattern of behaviour translated in terms of loss and profit account, will not be able to conduct democratic experimentation. Either the authoritarian tendencies with the concomitant of concentration of power in the hands of titular heads of institutions will rear

their heads, or there will take place the diffusion of power among the vocal elements.

The real purpose of participation in decision making by the widest number of those affected among the faculty and the educated will be lost. The form will be maintained but the content will be completely missing. Indeed, the academic institutions will come to be dominated by caste pressure groups like Brahmins, Kayasthas, Bhumihars and Rajputs in line with the dominant political groupings in the respective areas. That such a sad situation has come to pass in Bihar is no matter for surprise. Kurukshetra University is yet another monument to such folly, with the newer universities of the Punjab not lagging behind in this respect. Many an institution in India has come to have a distinct flavour which seems to be in line with caste, religious or geographical origins of the class or caste dominating a particular institution. This situation being the rule rather than the exception, democracy is bound to have sectional flavoring. Democracy will thus become a hand-maiden of pressure groups pulling in opposite directions. The law of averages that evens out the opposites in conflict situations may have relevance to statistics but it is inappropriate in the present context.

Academic governance is appropriate only when the objectives of the educational system have been defined. A great deal of education imparted in our institutions of higher learning has no utilitarian angle. In a country with scarce resources, their utilization must strictly be related to early returns. Long-range investment needs to be drastically cut because delayed-action planning cannot be spread over an indefinite period of time.

Basic research should have been the first casualty, but it is unlikely because a considerable amount of vested interest had already come to be built to maintain the *status quo*. In fact, the order of priority ought to have been laid down by political leadership, with

the academic community thus enabled to have their own objectives defined. The adoption of democratic practice among the academic community will become meaningful in that context alone. The interaction of political decision making with participatory democracy in the academic field is the *sine qua non* of its success. Such a wedlock will also keep the wolf of low-level politicking among the academics at bay.

The harsh reality is that the middle path does not exist for reforming academic institutions in India. Options in the political field, education being a dependent factor of it, are being closed before our own eyes. The middle path as an option has disappeared from the very surface both in the political and educational fields. In the developing situation, only limited choices are left. Either direct democracy is introduced in all spheres of life or politics for personal ends is accepted as the norm.

The only example of direct democracy in this part of the world is the cultural revolution in China. Translated in educational terms, decision makers have been subjected to severe supervision by the whole body of students and teachers in every institution. Many decisions are taken in open bodies or committees with representatives of all interests represented. The courses are strictly utilitarian and all frills have been cut out. Medical courses, for instance, have been simplified to provide more doctors for the countryside. There are no longer any students in China as in our dear country being trained in courses of no direct relevance to the society or for which ready jobs cannot be provided at the present stage of development. Special privileges are intended to raise the level of the children of the underdog. Uniform standards have become the norm in China.

It is quite possible that basic research may come to be neglected for the time being. The lack of sophisticated equipment may result in the Chinese falling be-



hind the world. They may thus not become an integral part of the world mainstream due to their insularity. Paradoxically enough, the successful implementation of such a policy may result, over a period of time, in raising the standards of education from below upwards in China. It is yet difficult to say whether this experimentation will be successful. All said and done, it has been a grand experiment and a remarkable exercise in standing on one's feet four square.

**T**he approval of the Chinese experience in broad outline can by no means be construed as an uncritical acceptance for its implementation in this country. The transfer of technology creates as many problems as can result from employing the lonely furrow. Contemporary India and China, represent the two poles. The genius of India will be in transferring the technology strictly to the extent it is relevant to our needs and results in social change of a fundamental character. The large-scale experimentation symbolized in the cultural revolution\* should not be scoffed at but studied seriously in all its dimensions.

Tinkering with the institutional framework without fundamental changes will accentuate the existing maladies. Romantic flights away from reality have been the bane of our political system. The slogan of secularism, for instance, has been raised for the past fifty years with results for all of us to see. Participative management is no doubt a desirable objective, but it is by no means a panacea for our ills. Paradoxically enough, the results may be those not intended. In terms of class analysis, the advent of democratic processes in academic institutions on any large scale will lead to the inevitable dominance of the petty bourgeoisie who will bring down the universities to their own level. At its best, this assures a low-level of stability,

a framework within which no innovation is conceivable.

The example of several universities in Uttar Pradesh bears this out. The character of the universities like Banaras, Allahabad and Lucknow has been transformed for the worse. The children of the rich peasantry (and petty bourgeoisie), first as students and subsequently as teachers, will come to dominate the university scene in this country. The demand for the establishment of universities in all and sundry places is the offshoot of the urges of the countryside, dominated mainly by the rich peasantry, to carve out a niche for themselves.

University culture in course of time will draw its inspiration from the same class. Neither the virtue of stability in the present system, like the use of the English language at the Centre and for inter-State communication, nor the bonus to be earned by a radical transformation resulting from a 'proletarian' revolution will accrue as a result of the introduction of participatory management on any large scale in the country. The idiom of 'falling between stools' will thus find its apatheosis.

**A** word needs to be said about the special features of academic culture of the lower middle classes. At its worst, it transmutes itself into fascism. The burning of books, smothering of all intellectual dissidence, intolerance of minority groups and positive hostility towards innovation will be the special characteristic of academic life in the changed situation and it will become vitiated to the extent that no free discussion will be possible. An inkling of the things to come was the debate over the medium of instruction in several parts of the country. These are not imaginary fears because they have already materialised in several university centres in India. The only saving grace in all this is that the developments so far can be compared to pilot projects, heralds of things to come.

One of the premier universities in the South is a good example of

how the institutions get transformed for the worst. Some day one should compile data about the social composition of teachers of this university and compare it to the situation before independence. Not surprisingly, academic attainments will be found to be only one of the several factors that go into the making of a university teacher. The most important consideration is that he must not be a Brahmin by any stretch of imagination. Brahmins, both of the bluest and palest shade, are required to fend for themselves in other parts of the country. The metropolitan city of Delhi has more of them in important positions than the capital of the State. It is a matter of satisfaction that the loss of the State capital is Delhi's gain. How national integration is practical in the same university can be gauged by counting the number of North Indians on its faculty.

A close look at the situation in yet another State located in the same geographical area will bear out similar conclusions. That the same caste, supported by its brute majority, dominates at political and academic levels is not a matter of surprise. The marshalling of forces under the new dispensation of participatory management of academic institutions will act in favour of dominant caste groups with lower middle class and rich peasant backgrounds. The dominance of the academic institutions will thus be complete in course of time.

**T**he triumph of a lower middle academic culture all over India is only a matter of time. It is not surprising because the universities are increasingly becoming parochial by adapting themselves to the local environment. The sons of the soil will dominate them. Having received the first lessons in politicking in the community and at the college and university levels as students, the academics can be depended upon to make use of their democratic rights in the universities very effectively. Gradually, the universities will come to be dominated by people who

\*It is however to be recognized that the cultural revolution is basically a manifestation of the crisis in the Stalinist System.

can mobilize votes in the academic bodies and marshal forces for agitational purposes.

Undoubtedly, there will be a few bright spots in the general gloomy picture presented here. The institution of 'Head of Department' needs to be placed under greater scrutiny. It is an anti-diluvian concept that continues to bedevil relations among the teachers and students. Like in the Hindu marriage, those in a department can never escape from the Head of the Department. 'Until death do us part' should be the slogan penned on the walls of every department in Indian universities to remind all of the great mental torture that may be the fate of those entering its portals as teachers or students. The selection of a person to such an august position is a one-shot affair but the consequences of the same are far reaching affecting the future of several generations.

A considerable amount of damage can be done to the future of any university because of the authority wielded by the Head of Department in appointments of teachers to colleges and the university. Research students can be held to ransom by delaying or expediting as the case may be of their theses at the drafting stage. Examiners for theses can be selected conveniently to assure the desired result. Horse trading is also possible. 'You scratch my back and I scratch yours' principle will assure approval of the theses; the arrangement can be triangular or quadrangular to cover up the tracks. In this jigsaw puzzle, the first casualty is the integrity of the scholar.

Another dimension is added to the problem by the lack of mobility among Indian academics. This vicious circle can partly be broken by rotating the post of Head of Department at regular intervals. One person can be as bad as the other, but rotation assures some relief. This is one occasion when the present writer seems to be entirely in agreement with the proposition presented in the

poser. Doubts however remain about the introduction of democracy at all levels. One swallow does not make a summer.

In old-style Marxism, an individual was said to play a very subordinate role. Great men are the instruments of history carrying out their assigned tasks faithfully. Similarly, in the educational field, the romantic attachment to the principle of participatory management has dissuaded many persons from recognizing the role of outstanding men as embodiments of what is best in the educational system. It is out of sheer grit and determination of individuals that several institutions have earned a name. The leaders were innovators in the right sense of the term because they charted a new path. Some of them were authoritarians and others democratic by instinct. The common feature between all of them was the achievement of results in the face of adversity. They were at their best in conditions of scarcity and want. Therefore, the role of leadership is very crucial in a developing country where sound democratic traditions will be slow in taking root. Institutions can be built or destroyed by the accident of a single individual appearing on the scene or disappearing from it.

The anathema developed in some circles for the elite being leaders of education needs to be removed. The democratisation of decision making processes can play only a subordinate role. The ideal combination would be between the outstanding leader at the top and formal democratic institutions at various levels in academic institutions. The latter will consist of professional organizations, academic and executive councils, staff and student councils, departmental committees and a general body consisting of students, teachers and the administrative staff. The best arrangement in the circumstances will be what has come to be known as democratic centralism. The need is to improve the quality of leadership combined with the institution of the organizational framework as indicated above.

# The two campuses

S. SHUKLA

THE primary focus of the poser is on the elite institutions—the statutory teaching university, the specialised institute and the research centre where, notwithstanding the *zamindar's kutcherry* atmosphere at the bi-monthly board meeting (Poser p. 8), a semblance of participation still exists. Both faculty and managers do obeisance to the ideal of academic productivity and couple academic autonomy, howsoever mythical, with the idea of 'no-politics in educational institutions'. The students are still substantially drawn from the elite stream in the Indian educational system, which leads from the private fee-paying, English medium nursery, elementary and secondary schools through elite college to army, business management, or research institute or, for the greater glory of the family, to study, teach and do research abroad.

There is, however, also the politics of the other more pervasive campus. Almost 2500 of our 3000 colleges are, for all practical purposes privately owned. Public subsidy of the education in them of the order of 50 % to 70% or more only helps to fatten the caste—or entrepreneurial managements by offering them more resources for patronage, if not also personal aggrandizement and consumption and by entitling them to participate in the managements of the universities and, in course of time, to blossom out as 'educationists'. Nobody makes any bones here about power being the substance of campus politics. Nor much pretence of asceticism or

renunciation of power characterising the nobility of learning. Managements are quite clearly in business not for love but for power and for the use of educational institutions as resources in the broader struggle.

Unlike the elite university or institute, both faculty and student also see, and state, much more clearly the social promotional significance of the educational enterprise without disguising their vision with the facade of producing new knowledge, soaring the heights of the intellect and serving humanity or the nation with the fruits of teaching and research in the college. If the teachers do not have, use or compete for power, it is because they are just too poor, insecure and weak.

The politics of the college is important for understanding campus politics not only because it constitutes the overwhelming numerical majority of the academic work but also because it influences the university and the elite institutions themselves. Most universities do not still enforce any substantial security of tenure for teachers. Even more they do not require participation of teachers in management. Even where this exists, it takes the form of an occasional meeting to confirm decisions already taken elsewhere. Politics, then, consists in attempting to acquire a place in these informal decision making processes through caste or other nexus.

For the every day working of the college or for determining its teaching, research or other aca-

demie goals, most colleges do not have any internal mechanisms. The principal runs the place sometimes with considerable personal authority but more often paying due deference to the links of staff members with the powerful in the management or elsewhere. The question of academic micro-politics does not, therefore, usually arise. The struggles that arise are so often about individual preferment or even security or about the role of the college as resource for this or other competing elements in the political or bureaucratic arena outside. They are so infrequently about decisions to teach or research one way or another or even about which rival academic student will exercise power that it may be difficult to characterise the process as academic micro-politics. Indeed, it is worth notice for how small a part of the day either student or teacher is involved in teaching and learning—of whatever kind and quality—in the average college.

**T**his existential circumstance of the teacher combined with the low pecuniary and status rewards works in the direction of other avenues of happiness and satisfaction. The married woman so often finds a higher status as wife of a better placed bureaucrat or professional much as this may appear to the 'pure' academic to militate against her individuality and autonomous personality as an educated and emancipated person. The single woman is likely to be fairly miserable but for the fact that she is most often overwhelmed by other family obligations she has to carry. The small land-owning family youth or the son of a lower middle class family joining college teaching may find in developing property, often in the form of houses and farms, the satisfactions which the young man from an academic professional background may try to discover in acquiring higher academic credentials and getting out of the system to the few elite institutions if not to the administrative service.

In sum, there is a very small residue of an academic intelligent-

sia which may be interested and involved in academic micro-politics *per se*. This is not to say that such politics is above personal material and power interests. All politics is about resources and power and is legitimate because in all social and interpersonal situations, resources and power are involved. Academic micro-politics is not and need not be above or outside the nexus of resources and power.

Quite a few of the teachers are preoccupied supplementing their college incomes with examining, writing textbooks and getting them 'prescribed' or 'recommended' or doing other work outside the educational system. Herein comes the role of combining the exercise of power and use of authority. While some join with the heads and are rewarded, the counter-elite consisting of leaders of teachers organisations is preoccupied with the efforts to broaden the base of power, if not to substitute the present authority. This develops only to the extent the security of tenure obtains and at least a modicum of participation is officially accepted. And this, as stated earlier, is so often not the case.

**W**e see, thus, that there is a legitimate and essential function which politics in the college could fulfil when developed, viz., (a) expelling from power the 'educationist gentlemen' who wield all authority to determine the use of the resources from fees and public grants, and thereby (b) obtaining for the bulk of teachers the conditions in which academic politics would be possible. Meanwhile the best they and we all can do is to get the political system to recognise the necessity for such a change and bring about legislative measures to that end. All colleges have to be taken over from private management and handed to representatives of teachers, parents and the public.

Two obstacles stand in the way in a purely constitutional sense.

To the extent a college, like a privy purse, can be treated as 'property', its take-over by public authority, hopefully later to be turned over to participative managements of teachers, students and citizens, may be expensive until the passage of the current constitutional amendments. In case of the 'minority' institutions, particularly after the judgement of the Supreme Court on the Kerala University Act in 1970, we are faced with the curious situation that a college management is not even required to demonstrate support from the minority group as a whole but may only be managed by a body calling itself a minority body in order to be exempt from university—and, by implication, also State—regulation of its affairs in a manner similar to other institutions affiliated with the university.

While the constitutional ground for dealing with both these situations will be cleared after the passage of the 25th and 26th amendments to the Constitution, the battle is political. Managements, both minority and otherwise, are not without their support and linkages, to put it mildly, in the centres of power in our society. The major task of academic politics is to confront and defeat this linkage, and secure legislative and administrative measures to change the balance of power in college and university managements. As things stand, even the moderate measures of reform initiated in the *avant-garde* University of Delhi seem to be uncertainly awaiting the approval of the Visitor, i.e., the President which means, in practice, the Ministry of Education in particular and the Government of India, generally.

**I**n this major political struggle of its own, the academic intelligentsia starts with a handicap arising from the historical experience of India. It may or may not be true, as the poser suggests, that the ascetic-Platonic syndrome of the academic intelligentsia arose from its history of defeat and denial of effective power at the

hands of the British. But it is certainly true that the creation of the modern Indian state and nation is ascribed to the polity, to the nationalist leadership. Neither the industrial-commercial entrepreneur nor the academic intelligentsia share this credit. And, therefore, the power of the political elite has enjoyed a legitimacy which has made it possible for the State to intervene in the economy, culture, education, etc., to a far greater extent than might otherwise have been possible.

Again, in the post-Independence quarter of a century, the intelligentsia have joined the elite as members of a bureaucracy not qua intellectuals or academics. Nor has the intelligentsia by its participation in politics of the people or by the demonstrated effectiveness of its knowledge, technical or political, established legitimacy for a decisive role in the affairs of the State, economy or even academia itself. On the other hand, feudal or other anachronistic elements have wormed their way into and established effective links in the policy.

There are countervailing tendencies, too. For instance, the vastly increased recognition of knowledge as an essential infrastructure of the economy and the polity, and the consequent induction of many elements within the administration as well as politics who recognise the role of the academic intelligentsia. But these advantages are neutralised by the fact that centres of knowledge are developing outside the university system and within government and industry and that the university intelligentsia itself is weak in its commitment to the Indian university and tends to migrate to industry, government or abroad. Subtract from the ideal-type university,<sup>1</sup> its research or critical knowledge component, add to it a vast system of colleges with weaknesses on this front, consider the fact that a fair section of the elite is recruited from only a small

elite sector of the educational system and finishes its schooling in the western universities, add to it the fact that on account of imported know-how and expertise and technical assistance the strategic position even of the technical intelligentsia is weakened and you have a picture of how weak the university world, taken as a whole, is, in power terms, vis-à-vis the rest of the elite. The situation, of course, is further complicated by the fact that the bulk of the metropolitan university elite is no more a part of the university system to which it 'belongs' than it is an adjunct of the 'international' (i.e., western or 'foreign') intellectual system. It hardly pulls its weight as part of the Indian university system, at least in political and power terms. Instead, it is seen and sees itself, as part of the bureaucratic-professional sections of Indian society of three or more generations' standing, which forms the effective core of the bureaucratic managerial elite of today.

In the background of this basic political posture of the problem of the colleges and of the universities, the situation of academic micro-politics in the teaching universities, the higher institutes and other better placed institutions becomes clear. Though they are only a small minority, between 10 to 20 per cent of the institutions with a somewhat smaller enrolment, they are important inasmuch as they train a very much higher proportion of students later recruited to elite positions, employ a bulk of the professors and persons in other higher academic positions and account for the overwhelming majority of academic production in ideas, technical knowledge and manifest social influence, e.g., affecting the ideas and practices of politicians, administrators, technicians and the general public to the extent this takes place at all. Even so, their academic politics is repeatedly interrupted by the eruption of violence and disorder in the vast and expanding college network, the 'other' campus with which we started. Witness the

case of the 'avant-garde' groups in the Delhi University which, however much they seek to concern themselves with the possibilities of creating a 'modern' university are continually dragged into the problems of minimal peace and instruction in the vast periphery.

The conflict between rival ideas and groups, about the nature of the university and also about who will be boss gets intertwined with, if not overshadowed by, the struggle for survival and promotion in the other campus. Thus, if the professoriat seeks to obtain participative management, low prescribed workloads, and early preferment for its part of the university and, incidentally educate via English, that miniscule fraction of the student body which comes from westernised metropolitan (cosmopolitan?) elite backgrounds, its objectives appear clearly in conflict with those of the vast mass of college students and teachers from whom they appear to be taking away a disproportionate share of the public resources and over whom they and their clientele is seen to have unfair advantage in life.

When, as so often is the case, they only appear to facilitate the brain drain—the migration of both faculty and student to the western world—they are even less able to justify themselves in their demands for disproportionate shares. In their confrontation with the politician or the bureaucracy for more power or resources, they find their rear precariously exposed to onslaughts from the college communities. They themselves get divided into academically elitist elements, who would like to put the colleges in their place so as to get on with the real business—presumably of leisurely teaching and 'research' and more 'democratically' seeking to equalise opportunity and minimise disharmony.

Assuming some consensus on what the university or the college is for or about, it may be possible to lay down some ground rules for the transaction of business on

1. See my article 'The University in Indian Society' (Delhi *The Journal of University Education*, Vol 2, no. 3, March, 1964)

the exercise of authority and on managing innovations. The difficulty, however, of choosing between (a) teaching and learning conventional and deossicated knowledge, the most prevalent and at the same the most disavowed goal, (b) socially relevant work on the one pole<sup>2</sup> and (c) research or the creation of new knowledge on the other, lies in the fact that the last has glamour, the first is most practicable and the middle one is the most urgent but least prestigious at the moment.

Any division of labour between educational institutions as between (b) and (c) is likely to be an acutely contested affair, itself giving rise to much very legitimate academic politics, if only the issue were joined openly and earnestly. But even leaving these programmatic questions aside, it is relatively easy to visualise what we should be heading for and rather more difficult to actualise the desirable. In the current phase, the major focus of university politics will have to be on securing the right political arrangements within it.

Our chief complaints against today's arrangement can be summarised as the exercise of power by those not concerned or competent, the centralisation of such power in a few hands and their being generally resistant to innovation and to progress towards relevance. Let us recognise clearly, that with the growth of size and complexity in higher education, its bureaucracy, represented by Registrars and below will grow rather than lessen. To ensure its responsiveness to decisions by teachers, students and administrators of the top, we need not only more skills and knowledge in this bureaucracy—for which there appear no institutionalised arrangements yet—but also some foci of knowledgeable authority and power. The choice seems to be between building these foci at university levels (vice-chancellor/director) or at

department/college/institute level. Rotation at the latter level may transfer power upwards. Rotation at both levels may transfer effective power sideways into the university bureaucracy.

A very much more participant system of management involving a much large number of teachers can co-exist with any of the other arrangements or even replace the authority of both vice-chancellor and head of department. But then, if we give up hierarchy, we shall perhaps have to ensure some regulation of entry. Perhaps a five-year period of quasi-apprenticeship in learning for new entrants will in the elite institution, prepare the conditions in which much greater teacher participation in management may add to the effectiveness of management.

In the other campus (colleges), too, this may work. So much for 'who is boss?' Certainly, participation means a much less definite mode of existence. More uncertainty is a sign of a vigorous intellectual community all right. In any case, some of to-day's certainties are such unmixed non-blessings that the uncertainties of a participant existence could not be much worse. But we must clearly be prepared for a fairly drastic redefinition of the style as well as purpose of the campus as teachers and students all participate.

It is difficult to foresee the future except in terms of two completely divergent scenarios. Either the present pattern of social development continues in which education fails to touch a significant section of the population at all and the whole process of higher education is one of recruitment of increasing numbers from middle and lower middle strata of society into the monetised bureaucratic-professional sectors. Or a drastic change in the balance of political-bureaucratic power, forces a drastic redistribution not only of food, clothing and shelter but also of education.<sup>3</sup> In the first case, the

present uneasy interaction of the two campuses will continue. The arrangements to be devised will consist substantially of securing for the small research-cum-advanced teaching sector of higher education, participation of academics in decision-making while keeping the peace in the 'other' campus as best as possible.

In the alternative, we go through a period of reorienting college education towards work of socially relevant kinds and arranging mechanisms of selection of students and teachers to the creative higher institutes on the basis of social equity. Then, we can have participation in management in both campuses. This, of course, is linked with more substantial changes in the polity itself. And perhaps the academic might as well join in bringing these changes about.

In either case, though in different ways, the student will have to be as much a factor in the mechanisms of participation as the academic. The nostalgic feeling with which our Oxbridge academic seeks to replicate patterns of the *alma mater* here may never be satisfied. For, for the Indian academic, the period of his participation in management is not one of the authority of the older generation over the young. It is one of sharing with them the burdens and opportunities of tomorrow. This is a more complicated and a creative task. Its outcome will be different from what the western academic produced in his universities, i.e., not just knowledge but knowledge and rapid and deliberate social change. Academic politics intermeshes, thus, with politics in general and this must be cheerfully accepted and taken into account.

The rules of a game like this are rather more complicated than a scheme of participative management of the university. Ways have to be found for learning from society and environment and for influencing them, for institutionalising this interaction without prematurely freezing or petrifying it at the levels of today.

2. I have spelt this out elsewhere, e.g. "Priorities in Educational Policy" in *Economic and Political Weekly* Aug. 1971.

3. Ibid

# A comment

K. N. RAJ

IF politics is defined simply as an expression of the tensions and conflicts generated by the use of power, it must exist, in a latent or open form, wherever there is scope for the exercise of power. Nor are there many forms of social organization which do not require for their functioning the exercise of power of some kind or other in a certain measure. This is true whether one has in mind the State, a religious order, an educational institution, a trade union, a cricket team or even a family. That academic politics in this sense is unavoidable, and could conceivably play an important functional role, are therefore self-evident propositions if the phenomenon itself is presented in these very broad analytical categories.

But, it is not a point worth labouring very much unless one is addressing oneself to an audience that is innocent of the fundamentals of social organization. In fact, the underlying reasoning is on such a high plane of generality

that the conclusions it leads to are not particularly interesting or useful when one is discussing such concrete issues as those presented by the actual manifestations of academic politics in India today.

Nor is the understanding of the problem made much easier by presenting it as essentially the expression of a class conflict in some simple form. To equate students in general with workers in industry, and those entrusted with teaching and other related functions in these institutions as the 'representatives of the exploiters', may be good rhetoric; but it has very little content conceptually or empirically, and is more a parody than an application of Marxist reasoning. All that can possibly be valid in the analogy is the sense of alienation that can exist in both cases.

If the class character of the parties involved in academic politics is investigated and analysed carefully, it would indeed throw very useful light on the nature of such politics in

India today. But the conclusions, one suspects, are likely to be rather different from those drawn from a mechanical application of the Marxist schema for capitalist societies and unsupported by empirical analysis. (It is also probable that such study would cast some light incidentally on the class character and role of the theoreticians of academic politics who choose to ignore so much of the reality and discuss such problems within this kind of oversimplified and highly romanticized framework of analysis!)

The nature of any kind of politics, academic or otherwise, cannot be understood simply in terms of the distribution and mechanics of power. It is of course important to ask questions such as who exercises power ('who is the boss?'), what sort of 'norms' (or rules of the game) are enforced and accepted, and who gains or loses from particular innovations (and in which direction therefore different pressure groups are likely to pull in their own self-interest)? But all this constitutes only one aspect of politics. The other aspect is that there has to be some kind of larger purpose in politics. This is because without such purpose no social organization can come into existence or last for any length of time. The purpose (or purposes) may change over time and may reflect changes in the distribution and mechanics of power; but even such changes cannot be understood fully without taking into account what at each stage the purpose (or purposes) are conceived to be by the various elements which constitute the organization in question.

The character—or rather the characterlessness!—of academic politics in India today is traceable to a large extent to the fact that almost none of the constituent elements of the academic community has now any clear ideas or convictions about the ultimate purpose or purposes of academic activity. This is as true of the 'rebels' as of the 'guardians'; and it is clearly a reflection of the larger problems with which the Indian

economy and society are confronted and of the general confusion about the objectives and the means of achieving them.

Naturally, within this kind of setting, struggles for power have no particular direction or guiding principles, and there is infinite scope for opportunism of all kinds. It is true that the hierarchical structures that have been (and still continue to be) characteristic of the organization of academic institutions in this country have been responsible to no small degree for suppression of initiative and innovation; for patronage and corruption of a kind that those who have not had a chance of seeing the underworld of academic life might not even suspect; and for the creation of frustration all round. No one who has any familiarity at all with these features of Indian academic life will therefore question the need for radical changes in the distribution of power to permit greater decentralization of and wider participation in decision-making within these institutions.

What is not clear, however is whether those who are most well-organized and vocal today in the academic world, and therefore best prepared to take advantage of such changes, are likely to create a much healthier atmosphere. The leadership among teachers is not based, any more than among students, on shared ideals of any great relevance to the improvement of academic life or of the society at large. In fact such leadership is usually very disunited on fundamentals and can come together only on a coalitional basis against some 'authority' in issues of a diverse nature or in support of some common demand that has widespread appeal to teachers for obvious pecuniary reasons. (It is no secret that the best way of bringing to an end a meeting of any teachers' association, even in the Delhi University where there are many 'intellectuals' who consider themselves to be among the *avant garde*, is to raise a discussion on a strictly academic issue; an office-bearer or speaker who strays too far away

from favourite demands such as for a 'running grade' is in serious danger of losing his audience and support).

In this kind of situation it becomes possible, even after a process of democratization, for some of the shrewder and less scrupulous elements in the established hierarchy to enter into various alignments with the more ambitious representatives of the academic community thrown up by democratic processes and operate the whole system more for the advancement of their own personal or group advancement than for anything else. Some representatives of students are also sometimes brought into the coalition for specific purposes, such as for arranging demonstrations against or in favour of someone. There is usually an understanding of give-and-take between the different groups involved, and each has therefore something to gain from these alignments; only those who are outside this power game stand to lose.

This is usually what is referred to now as academic politics in India, and it is much too obvious and general a phenomenon to be dismissed simply as the direct or 'dysfunctional' results of 'running an organization of intellectuals by means of despotic flats uncontested by open controversy'. In fact, the characteristics associated with academic politics (in the sense of the term just indicated) have grown rather than diminished with extensions in the process of democratization. Moreover, most of those who can reasonably be described as 'intellectuals' are not usually very deeply involved in this kind of academic politics and they are therefore often the victims of both 'despotism' and 'democratization'.

One reason for the tendency of academic politics to take these unhealthy forms, even in the potentially promising centres of learning in the country, is perhaps the rapid rate of expansion of student enrolment and teaching personnel. Qualitative deterioration has generally gone alongside quantitative



expansion. When the numbers involved are too large, democratic processes usually function much less satisfactorily; and when the academic motivation of the participants is also not very great, it is not altogether surprising that the results are so bizarre in academic institutions. Much the same steps towards democratization taken within some smaller institutions and departments, and staffed by personnel of high quality, have shown very different kinds of results. This suggests that the corrective action needed is not a reversal of the process but much greater attention being paid to factors such as the size of academic institutions and the calibre of the personnel inducted into them.

But there is possibly another reason for the tendencies that are becoming increasingly more evident in academic politics in India today. It is that it is more or less a mirror-reflection of the politics in the country at large. The most characteristic feature of this wider politics appears to be the appeal and power of various forms of populism. Such appeal, so far as one can judge, is apparently based on the aspirations and frustrations of a somewhat heterogeneous social group that Marx would have described as 'petit-bourgeois' but could cover what is often referred to as the 'middle' and the 'lower middle' classes.

Populism can take many and rather complex forms—manifesting itself in politics as either Leftist or Rightist movements—and so one has to be very careful in making generalizations about it. Some features of populism—noted in a recent contribution on the subject by Professor Peter Wiles—are, however, certainly in evidence in India today; and it is not unlikely that they are an important part of the explanation for the trends in evidence in the realm of academic politics as well.

Populism is anti-intellectual. Even its intellectuals try to be anti-intellectual... When quite isolated from the masses,

populist intellectuals form a self-denying ideology of vicarious populism which differs in many ways from a movement with a large following.

Populism is strongly opposed to the Establishment, and to any counter-elite as well. It arises precisely when a large group, becoming self-conscious, feels alienated from the centres of power.

'...populism avoids class war in the Marxist sense. Though certainly class-conscious, it is basically conciliatory and hopes to convert the Establishment. It is very seldom revolutionary.

'Populism is, like all other movements, corrupted and bourgeoisified by success. Not only power, also responsibility corrupts. Movement is easier than government. But since it is so unsophisticated and lacking in ideological stability, this degeneration comes with unusual and tragic speed.'

Which direction this kind of populism will take in India in the future, how it will affect academic politics, and whether academic institutions will survive it all is more than one can venture to predict now. There are also some important differences from region to region within the country, and they make any generalizations and predictions particularly hazardous. In any case one should not be fooled into thinking that the manifestations of political activity that are being witnessed in the academic world today are the beginnings of a creative alliance between students, teachers and the working class for creating an ideal society that will emerge out of their common struggle. The urges that lie behind them are (with rare exceptions) much less lofty in character, and the purposes they are being made to serve are (almost without exception) even more uninspiring.

\*Peter Wiles, 'A Syndrome not a Doctrine', in *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, edited by Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (Widenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1970).

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for the split in Russian Social Democracy. Mao's Marxist heritage, then, is ambiguous; and it is important to know how he views the different standpoints as they are concretized by Russian experience. Might it not be possible to explain Mao's fidelity to Stalin, and the charge that he has stood Lenin on his head, precisely in terms of their alternate theoretical ideas towards 'organisation'? In the belief that this is crucial, I will spell out my premiss:

Lenin's preoccupation with the primacy of organisation produced a certain indifference to the larger concept of society. The rapid changes of policy from 'war communism' to NEP, indeed the willingness to countenance a partially capitalistic economy, were due to a conviction that if the party could maintain proper organisational purity and theoretical discipline, society could take care of itself, i.e. if the 'kernel' was sound, then the state of the 'periphery' was less important. (Luxembourg had stressed the importance of the 'periphery' as a means of galvanising the party.) Stalin, in an important sense reversed Lenin's emphasis. In the Great Purges, he broke down the distinction between party and society. The means of coercion developed against society during collectivization were now turned against the party and society was brought in once more to balance an unsatisfactory structure and a self-satisfied ideology that had developed within it. The Stalin period was thus characterised by an organisational flux, precisely to prevent immobility, and to ensure that the needs of society made themselves felt within the party.

I will admit this representation is simplistic—yet, even in this measure it is so crucial to an understanding of Mao, that it is surprising it should have been left out. Some of the articles wondered aloud whether the Cultural Revolution involved a 'capping' of spontaneous discontent by organisational action, and then proceeded to prove that what was done was done in order to invoke allegiance. It is pernicious to do this without conveying a sense in which Mao's choices were logically rooted in a conscious theory and an appraisal of Communist experience.

Meanwhile, Mr. Mohanty might express a preference for a more theoretical formulation than mine: 'Organisation', as Lukacs says, 'is the form of mediation between theory and practise'. But this ability to 'mediate' is seen most clearly by the way in which it manifests a much greater and more confident sensitivity towards divergent trends than any other sector of political action. This is typified in the Russian, Chinese and

German (Social Democratic) experiences, where no sooner have theoretical antagonisms been given an organisational form than they have turned out to be sharply opposed and even incompatible. Is it not possible to take cognizance of the Chinese situation within this framework? We know that it is precisely the interaction of spontaneity and conscious control that is typical of the way new organisations arise, and if we can encompass the process-like nature of their birth and growth, do we not have a vital perspective on the Chinese model?

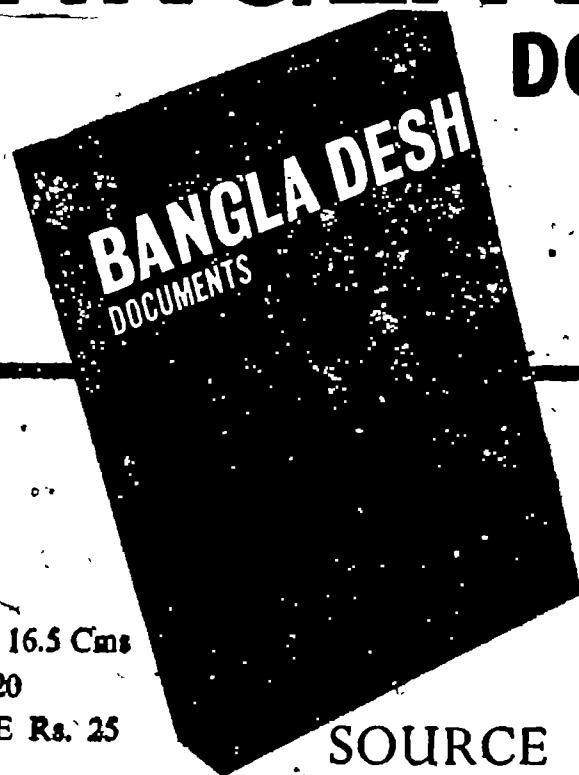
Lastly, I will discuss Maoist 'voluntarism', which I believe to be the most distinctive feature of Chinese socialism. In the process, I hope to round off the unfinished aspects of what I have said about organisation and ideology, and to disqualify its derogatory equation with 'idealism' per se.

Both Mao and Lenin were led to stress the role of 'consciousness' because of a certain distrust of economic determinism. Lenin's theory of natural 'economism' as a development of undirected working-class movements is well known. There is thus no 'heresy' in Mao's basic assumption. On the other hand, those who stress Mao's Leninist heritage often overlook the fundamentally Leninist axiom that socialism could be defined as 'electrification plus soviets'—the view that a combination of industrialisation plus state ownership of production guarantees communism. As matters have turned out, it has guaranteed very little more than an industrialised economy. Did Mao somehow perceive this and decide not to put all his apples in a deterministic cart?

Here I would like to draw on a very useful thesis, which holds that Marxism-Leninism in China has been built up on a developed 'populist' world-view which it has never completely submerged. (Maurice Meisner: *China Quarterly* 45.)

The 'populist' world-view according to Meisner rested on a crucial dilemma: 'a voluntaristic belief in the decisive revolutionary role of the intelligentsia was accompanied by a basic faith that the truly creative forces of revolution reside in the people themselves.' This characteristic faith in the inherent potentialities of the people is constantly echoed in Mao's writings. No doubt, the redistribution of revolutionary favour stems from a specific situation—thus, while the rural basis of the Chinese Revolution led to a glorification of the peasantry, Chinese cities were the 'official and symbolic strongholds of the traditional Confucian order, of the Western imperialists and the

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KMT. And in many respects, 'the ultimate expression of Maoist anti-urbanism was the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution'. (Meisner). As Stuart Schramm said: 'It is hard to escape the impression that the Cultural Revolution is to a large extent a movement of the countryside against the cities, and of the peasants against the workers.'

How does this rural ideology pertain to 'voluntarism'?—to Mao's lack of faith in the 'objective' forces of history, to the possibility of the future bourgeois corruption of his revolution? It was the populists in Russia who argued that socialism was in no sense historically inevitable, but dependent on the wills and energies of men. A characteristic feature of Chinese politics has been encouraging mass activity and then imposing Leninist type organisational restraint on such action.

It is apt, in this context, to mention the bureaucratization that was a specific target of the Cultural Revolution. There may, as K. P. Gupta would delight in pointing out, have been a traditionalist Chinese pattern of bureaucratic behaviour in this—but at best it intensified a situation in which, as Weber says, 'every process of social levelling creates a favourable situation for the development of bureaucracy'.

Moreover, it is easy to see this process of bureaucratic institutionalization as threatening the very goals which revolution had stood for, with the emergence of social patterns and value orientations all contributing towards widening the gulf between the intelligentsia and the masses, the cities and the countryside. The most important social and economic innovations were consistent with this realization.

In effect this is a non-Leninist willingness to sacrifice economic development to preserve the social and ideological prerequisites for socialism, highlighted in its abandonment of the Party as the 'kernel'. For Mr. K. P. Gupta, then, to assert his belief in the inevitable institutionalization of the revolution is no more than to register his own faith in another kind of determinism. And to conclude from this that Mao's success will lead to the very ossification it seeks to avoid is almost absurd. If Mao succeeds, it will be on the lines of minimising a stratification precisely because of a cybernetical relationship between peasant and party. Should the need be felt, Mao has hinted at the possibility of 'one, two, three cultural revolutions' to check retrograde tendencies.

If Populism is thus seen in terms of a typology, much of what K. P. Gupta says in relation to 'loyalty-reinforcement' etc. is

insufficient. Populism can be seen to have been fostered by certain typical conditions:

1. a traditional peasant-based society, disintegrating under the forces of modern capitalism, introduced from without and generally perceived as alien.
2. the absence of a viable bourgeoisie.
3. the emergence of an intelligentsia alienated from traditional values and existing society, and
4. their desire to bridge the gulf that separates them from society by finding roots in the vast peasant masses and speaking on their behalf.

It is not a peasant ideology—but a protest ideology of intellectuals speaking for the rural masses. What is unique in Chinese revolutionary history is not the emergence of a Populist strain, but its appearance *within* the Marxist movement. Maoism explicitly rejects the bureaucratic and elitist tendencies which Lenin's 'technocratic bias' and organisational ideas have fostered. It is thus quite possible that an explicitly Leninist ideological heresy may prove to be something of a Marxist revolutionary virtue. It is precisely the Populist aspects of Maoism which have prevented the bureaucratic degeneration of the Chinese revolution and has created a situation of permanent ferment which keeps open the possibility of attaining (or pursuing) specific goals.

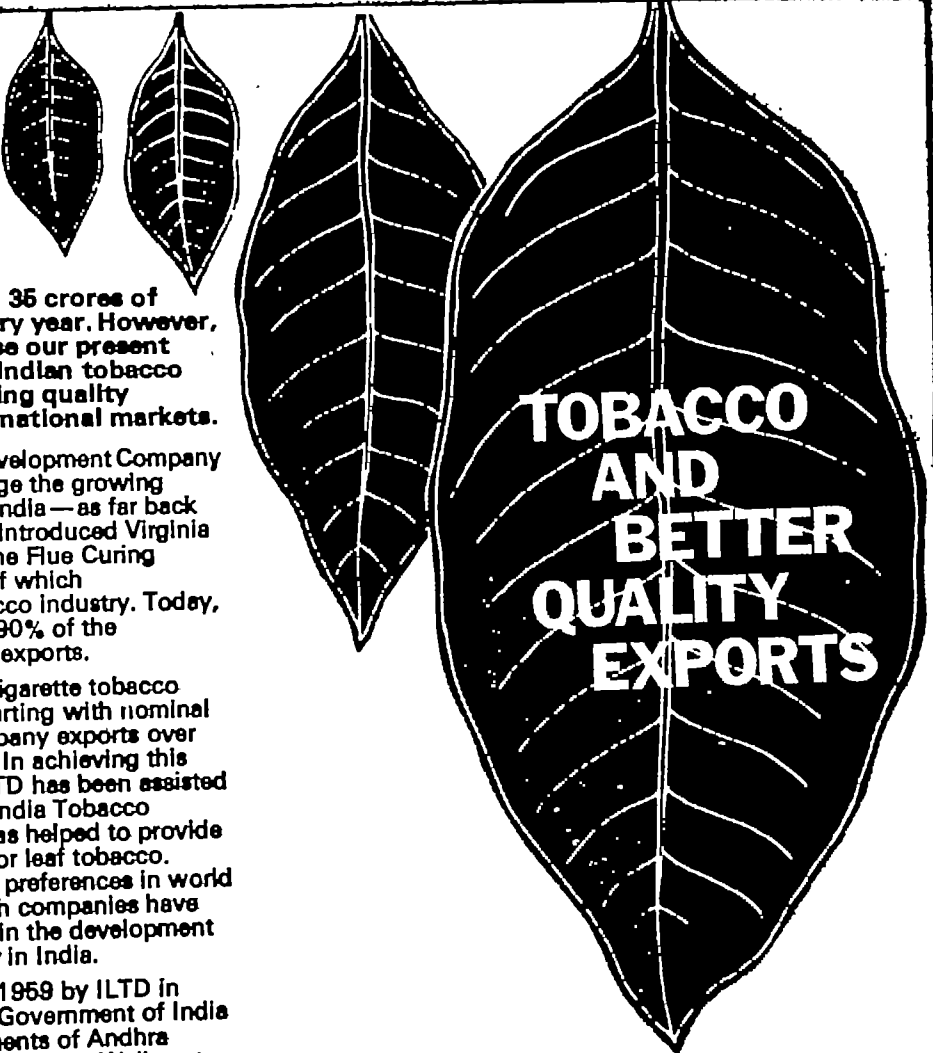
Given such an orientation, the Cultural Revolution would appear to have set itself two main tasks:

1. To avoid evolving a bureaucratic Party apparatus so as to prevent the rule of a new mandarin state.
2. To supplement the low level of the productive forces by developing a socialist consciousness. If this is seen to be 'idealist', it is closer to Marxism than was Lenin's mechanistic faith that a 'new man' would necessarily emerge from the material bases of socialism.

With this, Mao has formulated a new criteria for development—despite Mr. Gupta's scorn, it is a fact that Mao has posed an alternative to societies of the American type, based on growth for growth's sake and on a religion of means. The principle of seeking a new type of consumption, of forming new means and a different civilisation that is not based on individual comfort alone, has at least been stated. To ignore this is to turn one's back on a process of creative reflection which no amount of academic pinioning between pseudo-sociological categories can obscure.

Pradip Krishen  
New Delhi.



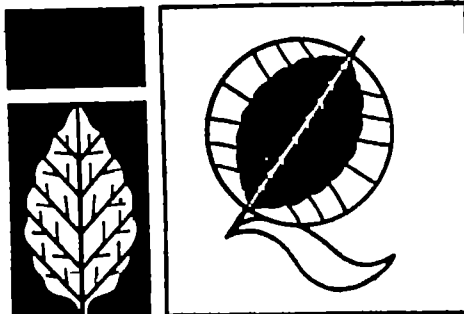


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Workers at Shriram Chemicals get a lot more to live by. In addition to just wages. They, along with their families, participate in national and religious programmes sponsored by the company, get interest-free loans for purchase of costly utility items, scholarships for children's education, handsome rewards for higher productivity, necessities of life at subsidised rates, house rent and conveyance subsidies.

These programmes are a tradition at Shriram Chemicals.



**PROMISE OF PLENTY WITH**



## KEEPING A NATION ON THE MOVE



*a national trust  
for economic prosperity*

As many as 20 airlines of international repute avail of INDIANOIL's expert refuelling service. In the growth of India's transport and communications, INDIANOIL has been playing a distinct role. But that is not to belittle its contribution to the nation's agriculture and industry.

In a short span of a decade, INDIANOIL has emerged as the biggest oil refining and marketing organisation in India—meeting more than half of the nation's total requirements of petroleum products.

With a chain of refineries processing indigenous crude, a vast pipeline transportation system, and a countrywide storage and distribution network, INDIANOIL has ensured an uninterrupted flow of oil for India's defence and development.

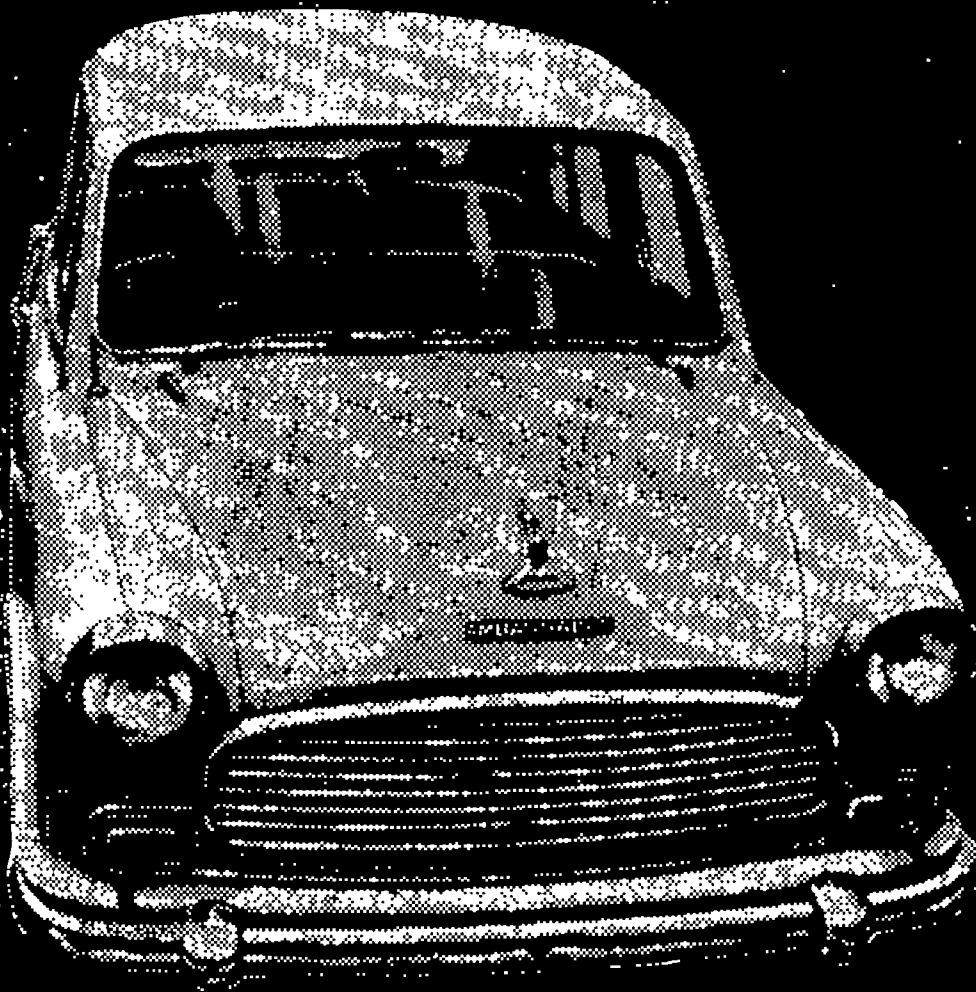
As part of the nation's planned development INDIANOIL ceaselessly strives to take the country towards self-reliance and self-sufficiency in petroleum.

**INDIAN OIL  
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*A. Dattaram - ROC-74*

# Ambassador

*Mark II*

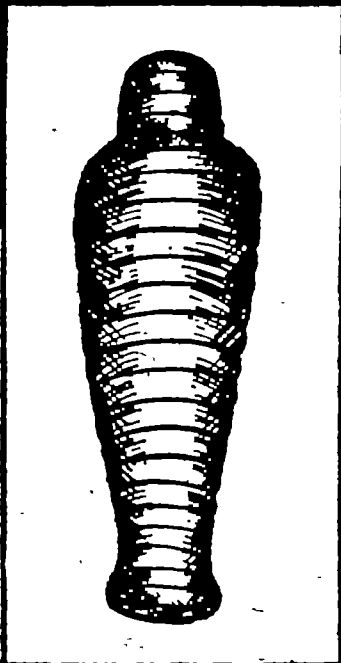


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ASP/HM-2/71

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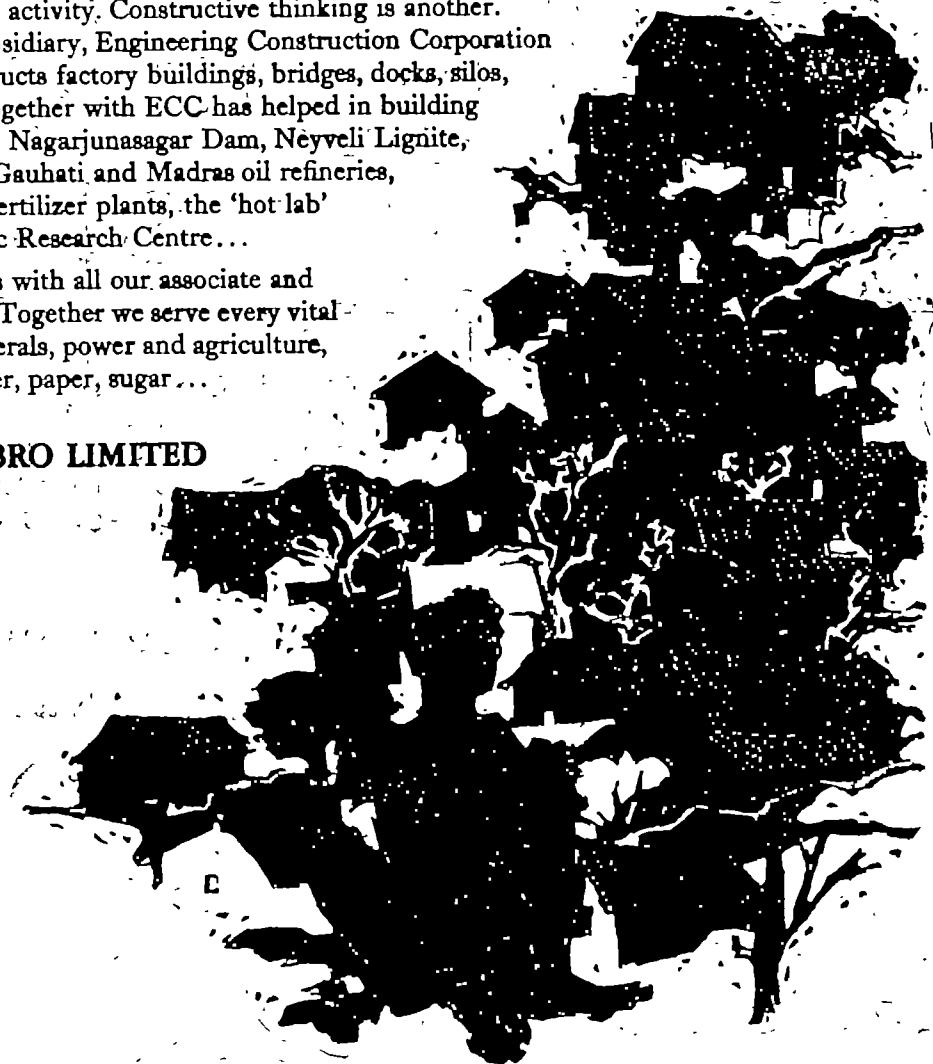
# We need 84 million roofs above our heads so we aim at concrete thinking

India needs 84 million homes right now. And we're not home makers. But if you look at it as a concrete problem we can offer concrete ideas. We can design, manufacture and instal cement plants. We can help reach the target of 32 million tonnes of cement which India hopes to produce by 1980.

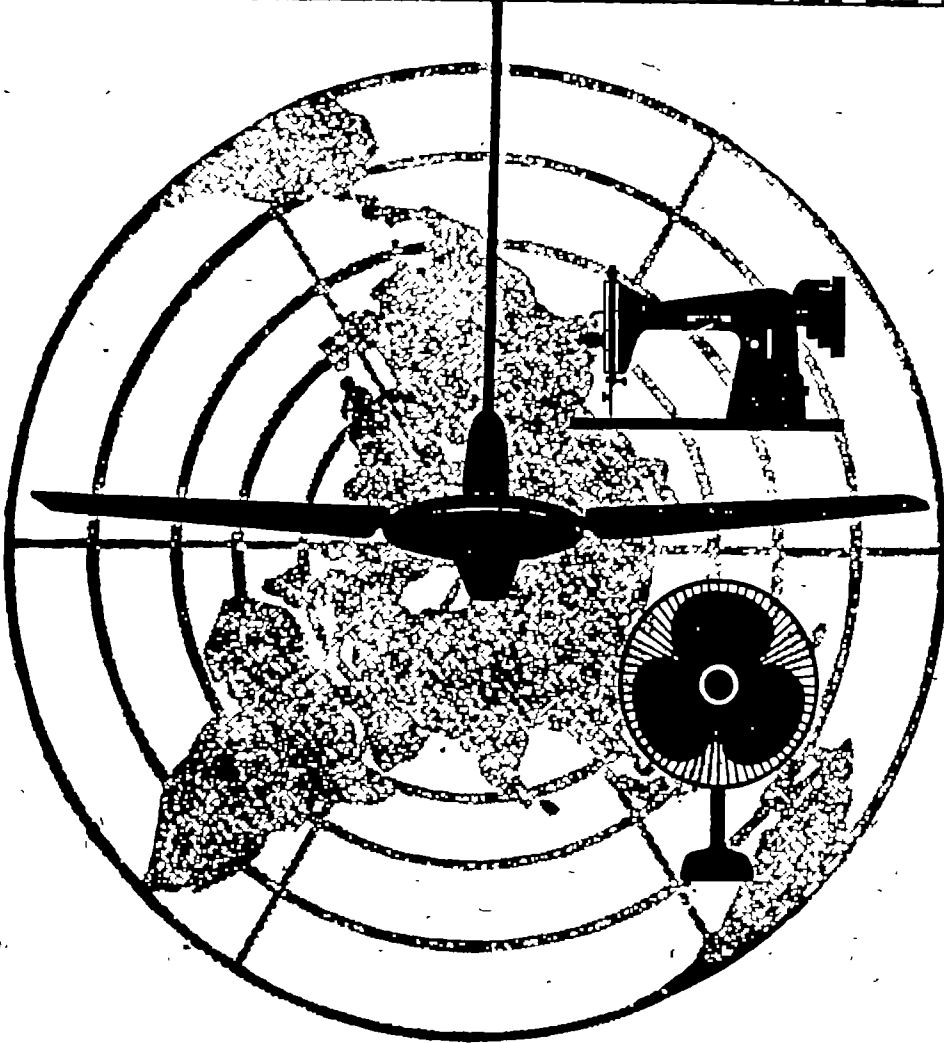
That's one field of our activity. Constructive thinking is another. Our wholly owned subsidiary, Engineering Construction Corporation Limited (ECC) constructs factory buildings, bridges, docks, silos, skyscrapers... L&T together with ECC has helped in building major projects like the Nagarjunasagar Dam, Neyveli Lignite, Rourkela Steel plant, Gauhati and Madras oil refineries, Gujarat and Kanpur fertilizer plants, the 'hot lab' for the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre...

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JS-17/46



## *Milk co-operatives as an instrument for adult education*



# What happens when a village woman in Kaira peers at buffalo semen through a microscope?

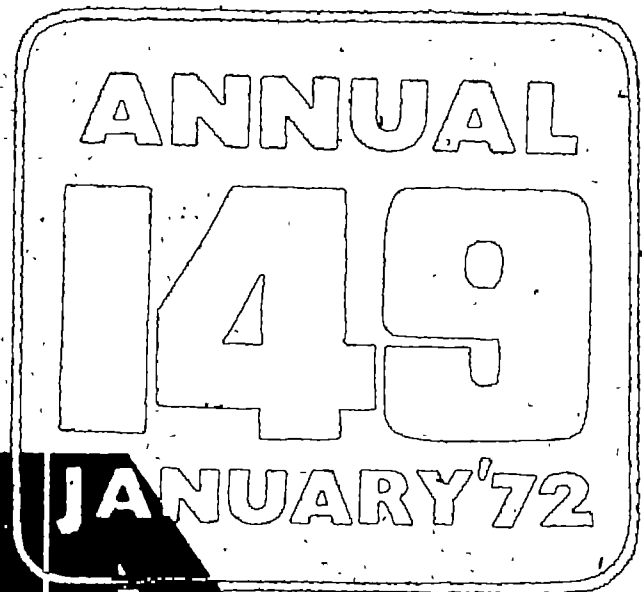
In Kaira, batches of women—most of them illiterate—visit the artificial insemination centre every day. They learn the mysteries of conception and birth in scientific terms, from the technicians employed by their milk co-operative. Can they help relating these facts to themselves? When their technicians speak of the nutrition needs of buffaloes and calves, their thoughts turn to themselves and their children.

A new view of their own life begins to form, and the frontiers of knowledge widen. When true education begins, superstition breaks down.

## **Amul has shown the way.**

ASP/ASP/BB-13

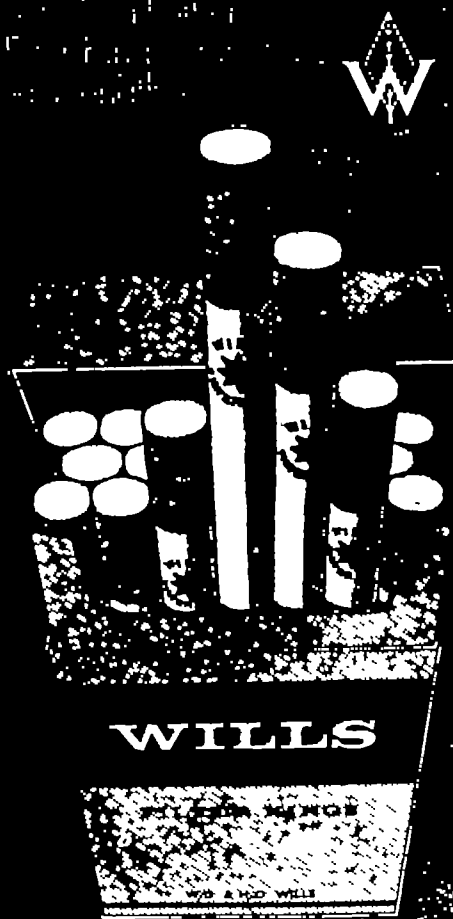
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START A LONG AFFAIR



# OUR COUNTRY OUR PEOPLE OUR TRADITION

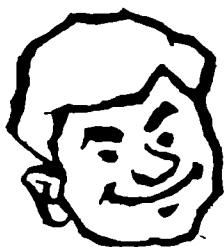
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## KEEPING A NATION ON THE MOVE



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for economic prosperity*

As many as 20 airlines of international repute avail of INDIANOIL's expert refuelling service. In the growth of India's transport and communications, INDIANOIL has been playing a distinct role. But that is not to belittle its contribution to the nation's agriculture and industry.

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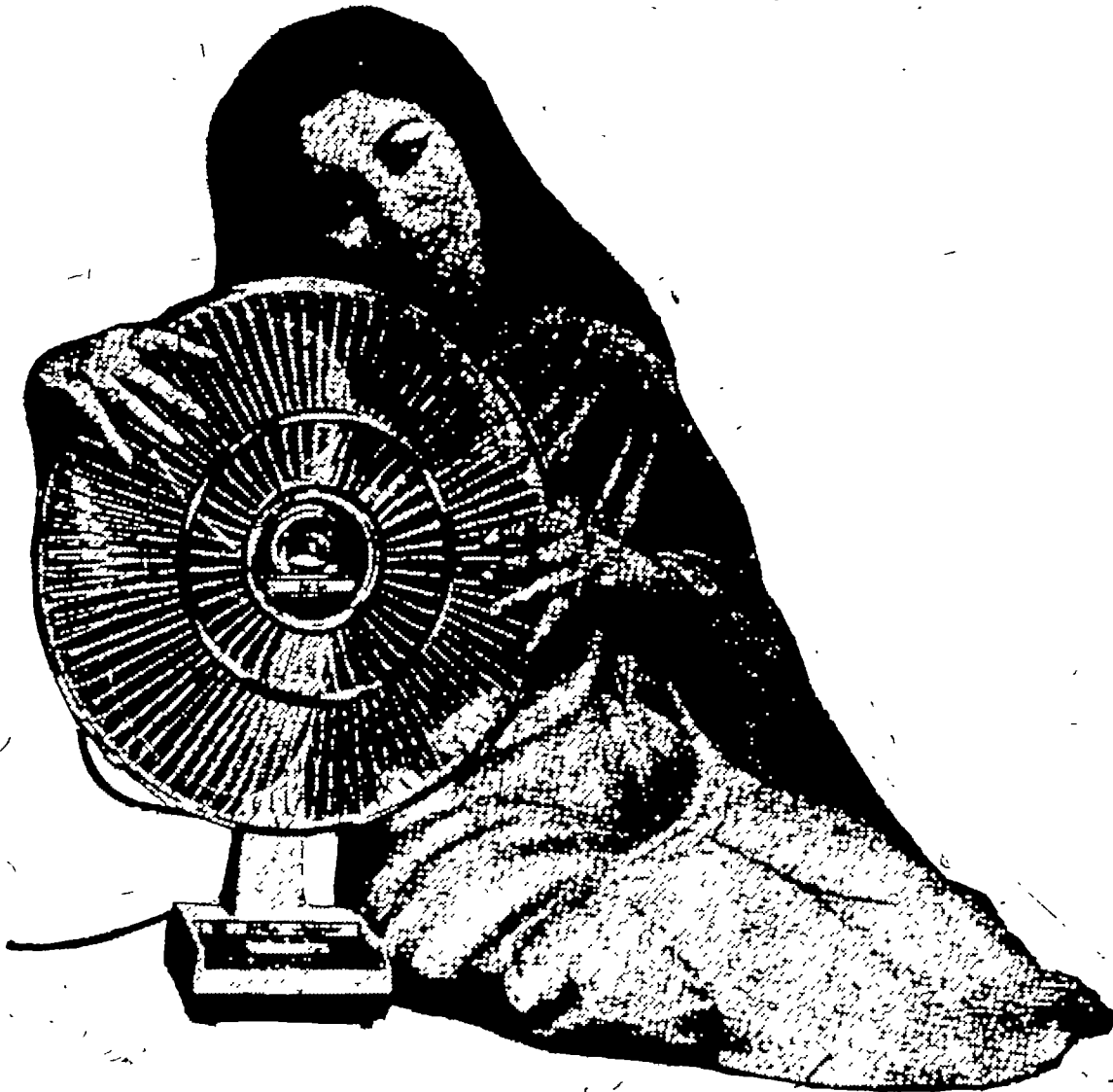
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As part of the nation's planned development INDIANOIL ceaselessly strives to take the country towards self-reliance and self-sufficiency in petroleum.

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## A NEW DAWN AWAITS... A NEW DEAL

### For weaker sections in Andhra Pradesh

*What has Andhra Pradesh Government done for them ?*

- LAND FOR THE LANDLESS:** During the last one year a million acres have been distributed as a result of crash programme.
- A LEAP FORWARD:** To ensure a quicker pace of progress for the tribal population, the plan allocation has been increased by ten times, protective legislation of a radical nature for scheduled areas and debt relief legislation have been enacted. Welfare of Harijans — 'children of God', received an impetus by five fold increase in the plan under this sector.
- A MASSIVE VENTURE:** A Rs. 1.5 crore scheme for the economic development of the scheduled areas has been launched.
- HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS:** A Rs. 12-crore housing programme to cover nearly 70,000 families belonging to the scheduled castes, tribes and other backward classes is being programmed by the State Government.

NOT ONLY THIS. BUT MANY MORE MEASURES FOR THE WELFARE  
OF THE DOWN-TRODDEN ARE CONTEMPLATED.





# STOP!

we have a  
point to make

## 5 POINTS

in fact

Though you live in India, in Asia, the security of Europe, the peaceful co-existence of the European peoples and states is bound to be in your interest as it is in ours.

The situation in Europe is still burdened with unsolved problems.

And here we come to the point, 5 POINTS, in fact.

Here is the GDR's contribution to safeguarding peace in Europe, formulated in 5 points.

5 POINTS - you should know :

**1** Without prior conditions THE GDR WORKS FOR THE EARLY CONVOCAION OF A EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE.

**2** THE GDR MUST BE ADMITTED TO THE U.N. This would correspond to the principle of universality of the world organisation.

**3** The GDR respects the sovereignty of other states. Every state should respect the sovereignty of the GDR and ESTABLISH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS with her.

**4** Since "Germany" has long ceased to exist, a "reunification" cannot be foreseen and "special inner-German relations" are just not possible. THE GDR ADVOCATES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NORMAL RELATIONS WITH THE FRG according to the principles of international law.

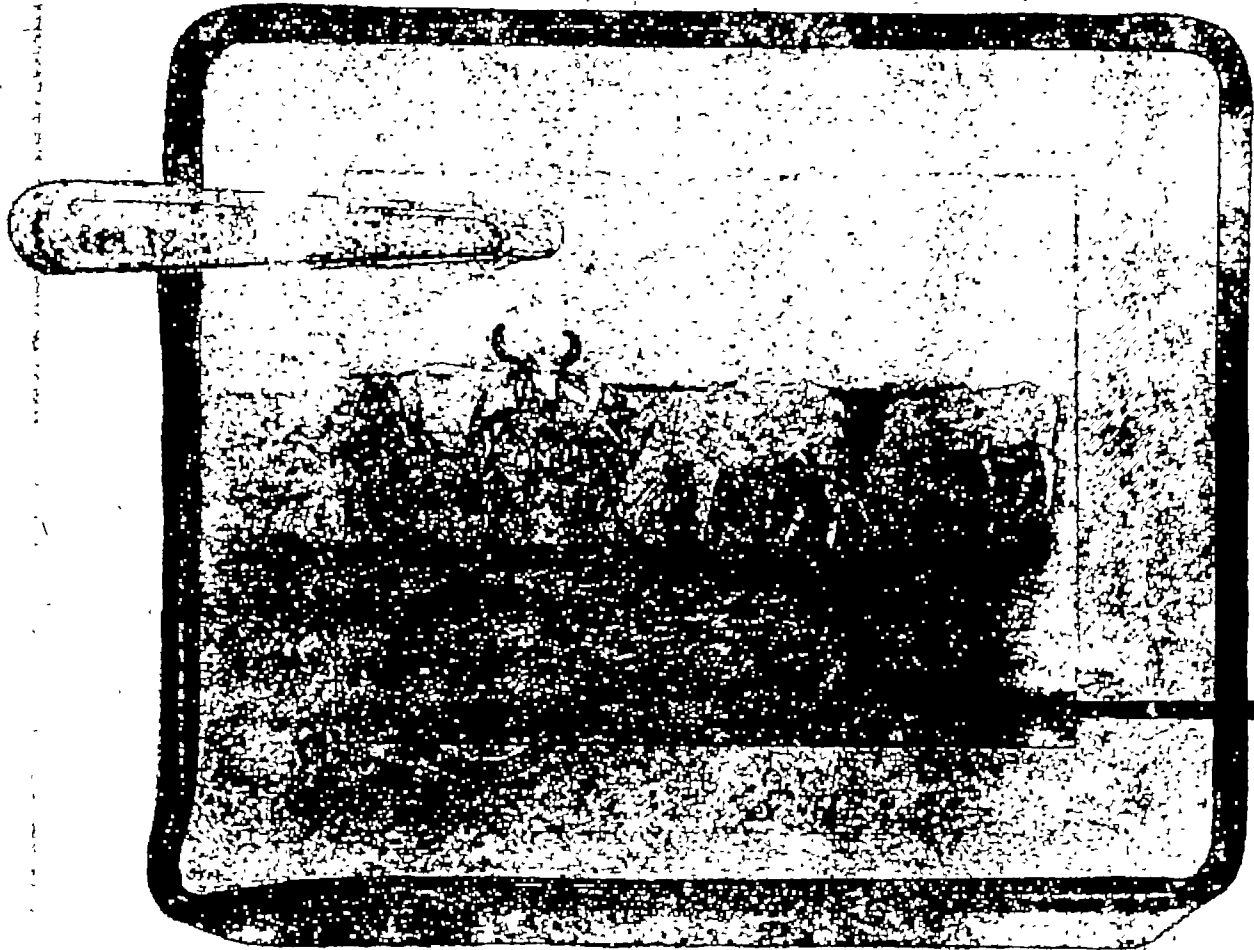
**5** THE GDR IS READY TO NORMALISE RELATIONS WITH WEST BERLIN which is situated on her territory. A West Berlin agreement eliminates the basis for disputes and conflicts.

These are the GDR's 5 POINTS, her share in the struggle of the socialist community of states, her Panch Sheel for the security in Europe.

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Our customers include some of the world's leading manufacturing and trading concerns.

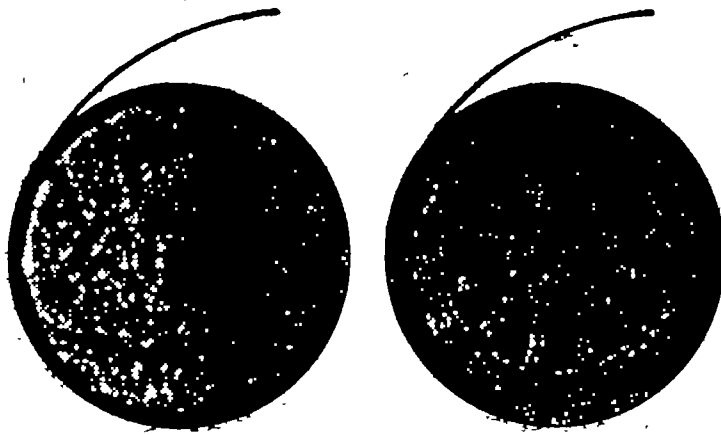
The secret of this world-wide acceptance lies in our policy of product quality—the only sacred cow in our fast-developing organisation.



**SATYADEV CHEMICALS PRIVATE LTD.**

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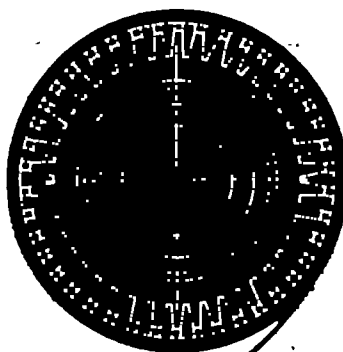
mcm/b/sc/1



Development is proceeding in spite of the cultural attitudes, social institutions and political conflicts which sometimes seem to be such immovable barriers.

It is not a smooth, uninterrupted progression, to be sure; rather, growth appears more as a series of fits and starts.

"And yet," as Galileo is supposed to have said, "it moves!"



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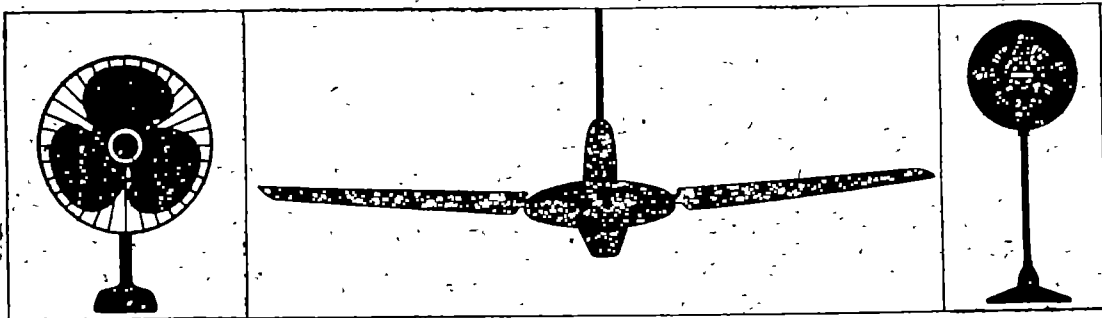


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To ensure that more and more people can get ample and better food at stable prices we buy grains from the farmers, store it safely and supply it to the consumers. Year after year the Food Corporation has been buying increasingly large quantities of various food grains like wheat, rice, millets, maize, pulses etc. to keep the prices stable and build stocks for the nation.

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*Effective for the aches and pains of colds and flu, headache, backache, muscular pain and toothache.*

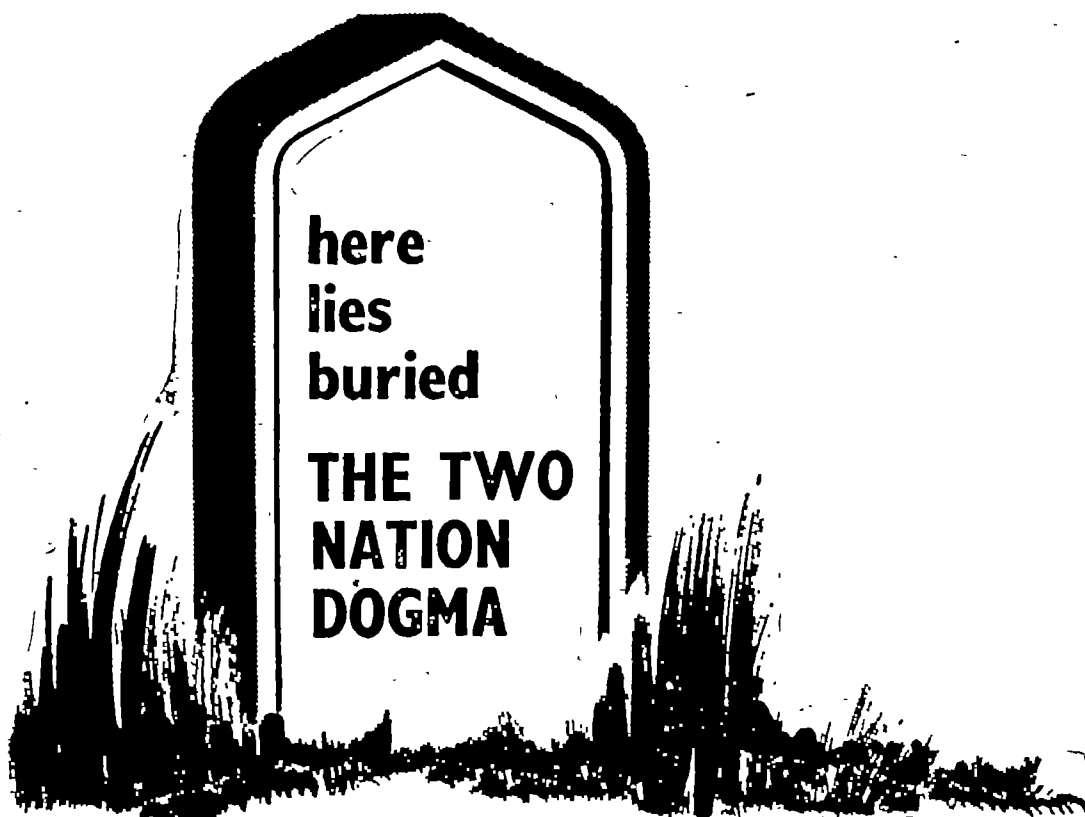
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Y 6-7



Hindus and Muslims cannot live together, they said, denying history. Pakistan, therefore, set itself up as a religious State.

And then Pakistan noticed millions in their midst who had a different culture and language. So they decided that the two groups could not live together except as masters and slaves.

But the exploited majority threw off the yoke. And today Bangla Desh is the country with the second largest Muslim population in the world, after Indonesia. Pakistan is not even the third. India is the homeland of more Muslims.

But neither India nor Bangla Desh bothers about such statistics. Both are secular democracies.



# A WIDE SPECTRUM OF TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT...

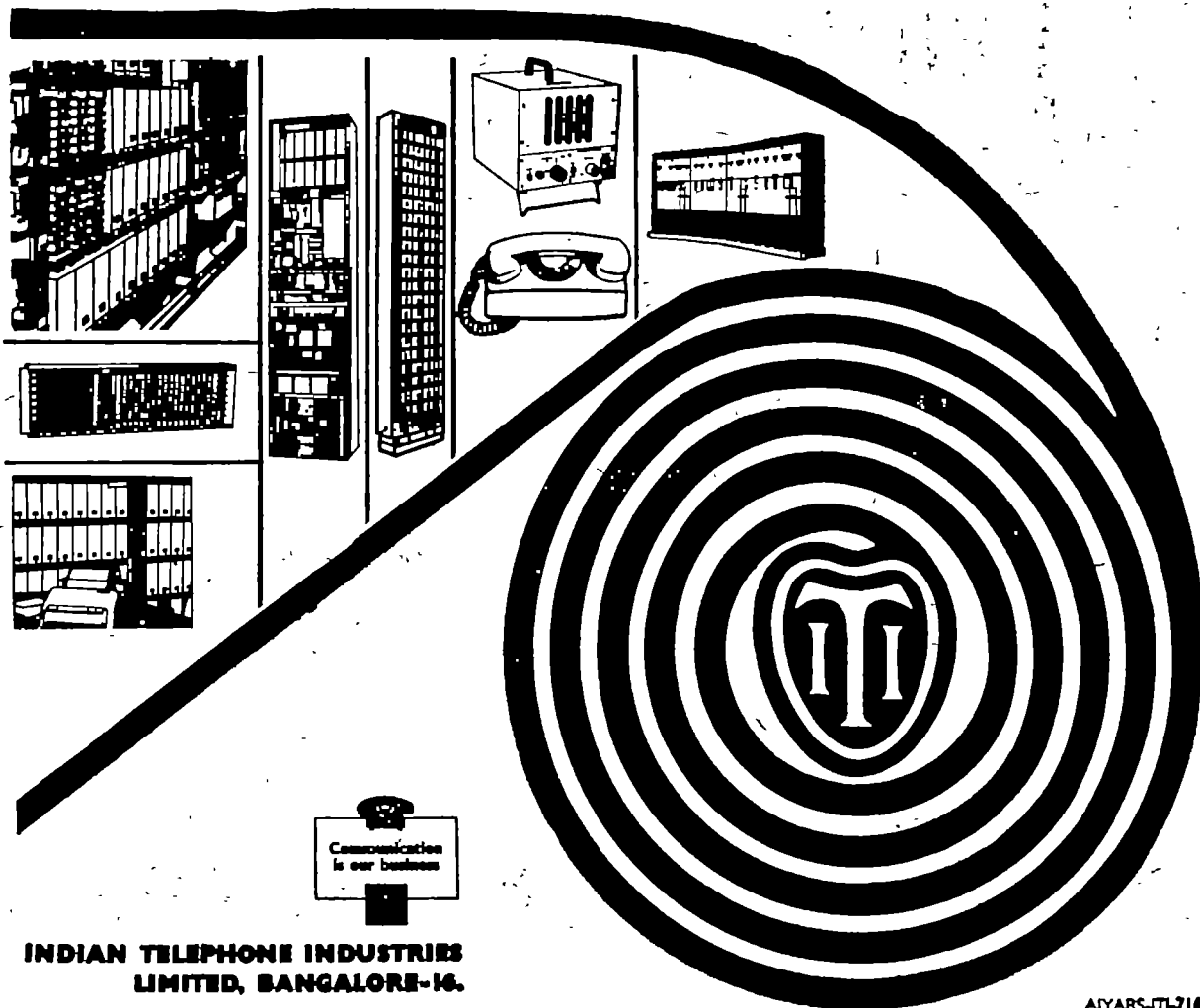
Telecommunication. A rapidly changing field, today. Opening new vistas...throwing fresh challenges to the nation.

ITI keeps abreast of the latest trends in telecommunication technology. Modernizing yesterday's equipment. Building telecommunication equipment for the seventies—automatic exchanges, both Strowger and Cross-bar...teleprinter exchanges...long distance multi-channel

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# BREAKTHROUGH

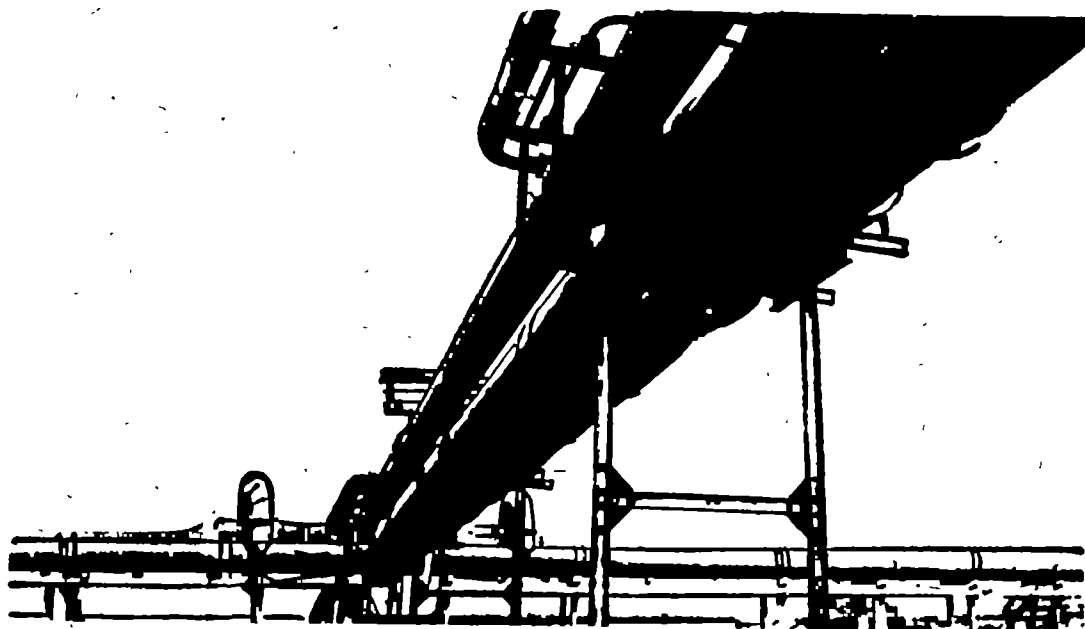
A new upsurge is sweeping across large parts of our country. Over wide areas farmers have achieved spectacular increases of crops by introducing high yielding varieties, fertilisers, pesticides and agricultural machinery.

This is a breakthrough. It has to be sustained. It has to be extended to every part of the country. The tools and techniques of this Green Revolution must be made available to hundreds of thousands of farmers. Then only can the sweeping upsurge spell lasting prosperity.

TAFE which manufactures the world's most popular tractor and farm machinery is proud that it has been able to contribute to this Green Revolution and looks forward to playing a more decisive role in the exciting adventure of modernising India's agriculture.

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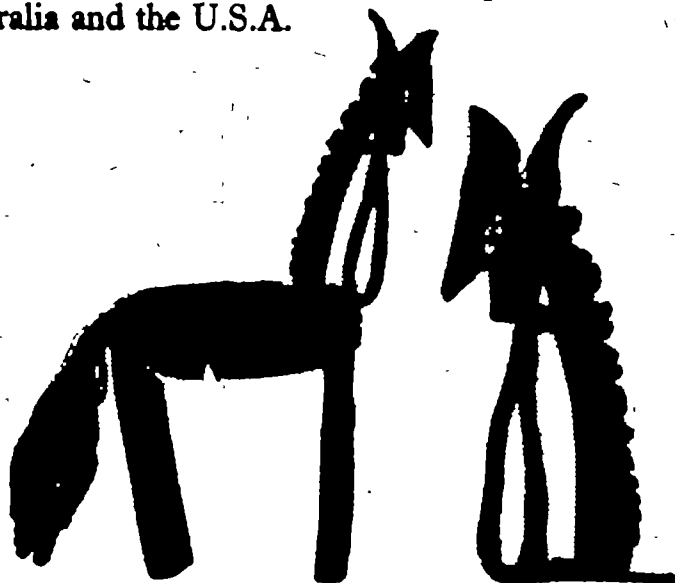
...by fabricating pipe-specials and constructing pipelines in many of India's development projects.

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# The VIPs



## Very Indignant Persons

**They expect us to fulfil our tasks honestly. But are we doing so ?**

Who are they ? Why are they so indignant ? And with whom ? They are the large mass of India's population, either under-employed or unemployed. Their employment, their hopes, rest upon the honest performance of those employed like us, who work in factories, in offices, in government and industry. The employed create the conditions for reducing unemployment and under-employment.

Every single person

Iam-HSP-10A/71

employed—manager, engineer, technician, factory worker, clerk, miner, doctor, lawyer, civil servant—has to answer these indignant persons ; whether he has been more concerned with preserving and improving his privileged position, than with fulfilling his assigned tasks with sincerity.

Those of us who are involved in the manufacture of steel have a special responsibility in meeting the challenge posed by these indignant persons, because there is no employment which does not involve the use of implements and

facilities, and there are few implements or facilities which do not involve the use of steel at some stage or the other.

Our task in Hindustan Steel is to meet the rising tide of indignation, by providing the steel needed for development. Dedication, discipline, peace at the working place and the will to work are our most important resources. Do not destroy them. Help us to build.



**HINDUSTAN STEEL**  
A national trust  
for national growth

# About half a million villages need the power to see light

## so we're becoming power conscious

We're aware of the possibilities of nuclear power. And we're developing new capabilities to foster its growth. After all, 1200 MW nuclear power can energise 25,800 additional tube wells; produce annually phosphatic fertilizer (206,000 tonnes  $P_2O_5$ ) nitrogenous fertilizer (370,000 tonnes N) and 50,000 tonnes aluminium; generate employment on farms for 1.4 million people; result in additional agricultural production of 9.4 million tonnes of foodgrain, 1.8 million tonnes potatoes, 11.2 million tonnes sugarcane. How do we know? From a study made in Western U.P. So we're using our energies to manufacture equipment that has never been made in India before—steam generators, end shields and calandrias for the atomic plants in Rajasthan and Madras—equipment that means more power for our people.

Power production is one field of our activity. Power Control is another. We design and manufacture a wide range of switch-gear to control power. We do it by adapting foreign technology. And by

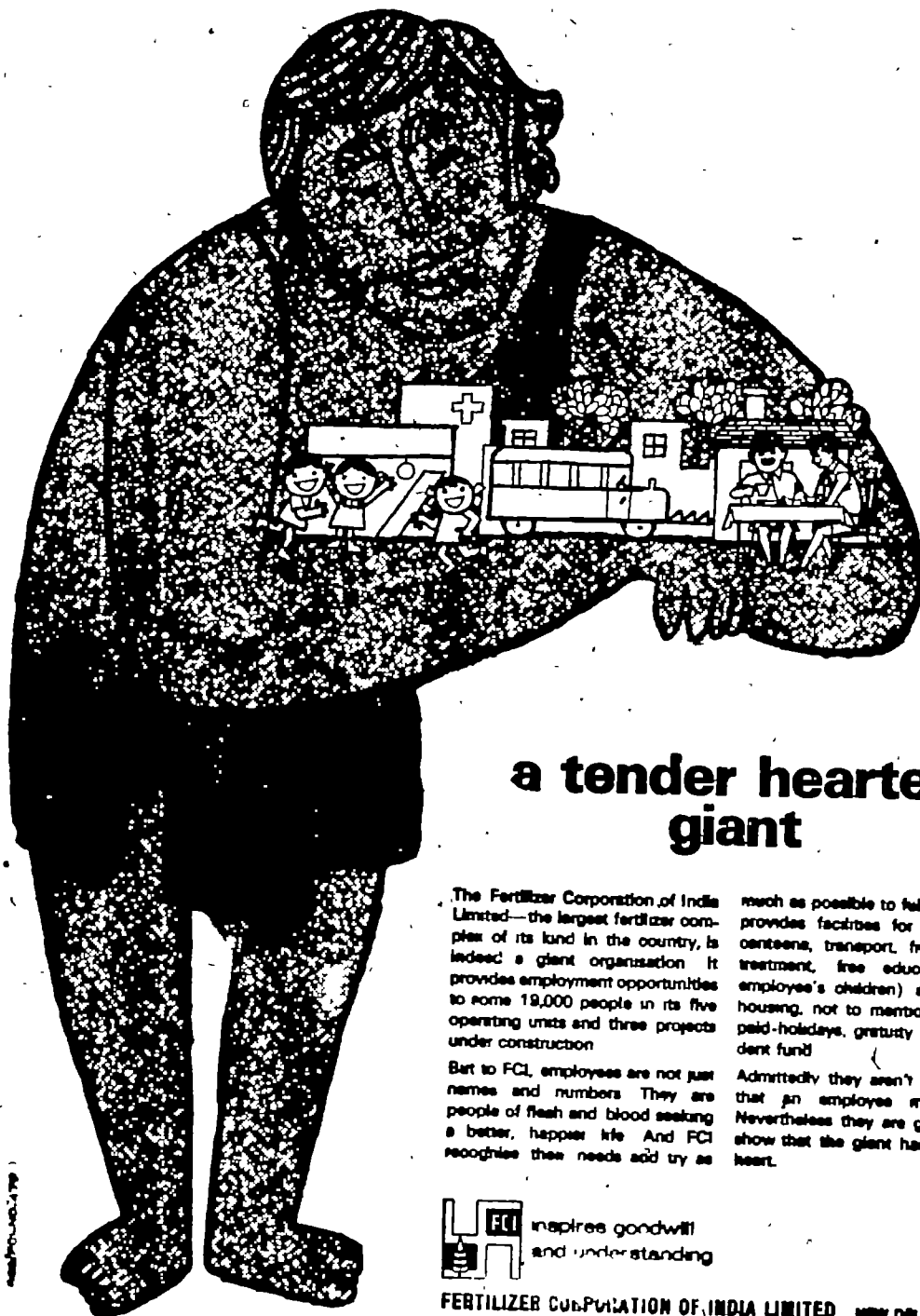
developing Indian technical talents. It's been our job for 30 years. Right now we have over 10,000 people. That excludes another 10,000 or more, who work in the 600 ancillary units we have assisted and developed over the years. And each year we find we need more people to pool their talents with us.



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## a tender hearted giant

The Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited—the largest fertilizer complex of its kind in the country, is indeed a giant organisation. It provides employment opportunities to some 19,000 people in its five operating units and three projects under construction.

But to FCI, employees are not just names and numbers. They are people of flesh and blood seeking a better, happier life. And FCI recognises these needs and try as

much as possible to fulfill them. It provides facilities for subsidised canteens, transport, free medical treatment, free education (for employee's children) and proper housing, not to mention crèches, paid holidays, gratuity and provident fund.

Admittedly they aren't everything that an employee may need. Nevertheless they are gestures to show that the giant has a tender heart.



inspires goodwill  
and understanding

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# **seminar**

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urnal which seeks to reflect through free discussion, shade of Indian thought and aspiration. Each month, igit problem is debated by writers belonging to different asions. Opinions expressed have ranged from congress icalist, from sarvodaya to communist to swatantra. The

non-political specialist, too, has voiced his views. In this way it has been possible to answer a real need of today, to gather the facts and ideas of this age and to help thinking people arrive at a certain degree of cohesion and clarity in facing the problems of economics, of politics, of culture.

\*/ROMESH THAPAR

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## **EXT MONTH : IMPACT OF BANGLA DESH**

# 149

## INDIA 1971

a symposium on  
the year  
that has ended

### symposium participants

#### GOVERNMENT BY MANDATE

**Rajni Kothari**, Director,  
Centre for the Study of Developing Societies

#### ASIAN POWER BALANCE

**Girilal Jain**, Resident Editor,  
'The Times of India', Delhi

#### THE GREAT BREAKTHROUGH

**Sisir Gupta**, Professor of Diplomacy,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

#### NEW DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

**C. T. Kurien**, Head of the Department of  
Economics, Madras Christian College

#### WEST BENGAL

**Nitish R. De**, Parle Professor of  
Management, Indian Institute of Management,  
Calcutta

#### THE INDUSTRIAL PICTURE

**Sarwar Lateef**, Assistant Editor,  
'The Statesman'

#### NATION BUILDING

**Sugata Dasgupta**, Joint Director, Gandhian  
Institute of Studies, Varanasi

#### MANAGEMENT

**Ishwar Dayal**, Indian Institute of  
Management, Ahmedabad

#### LAW AND JUSTICE

**L. M. Singhvi**, Executive Chairman of the  
Institute of Constitution and Parliamentary  
Studies

#### JOBS AND EDUCATION

**Vina Masumdar**, Post-graduate Department  
of Political Science, Berhampur University,  
Orissa

#### INDEX

A complete index of the past twelve issues  
prepared by **D. C. Sharma**

#### COVER

Designed by **Dilip Chowdhury**



# Government by mandate

RAJNI KOTHARI

WHEN the year 1971 began, there was already excitement and expectation in the air. Analysing the events of 1970 in the last Annual Number of SEMINAR, the present author had been led to the conclusion that the only way out of the instability and makeshift politics of that year was an early 'appeal to the people for a clear national mandate' through an election that was delinked from State elections. This happened a few days before the end of the outgoing year when the Lok Sabha was dissolved and a parliamentary election, delinked from State elections, had been announced.

As it turned out, elections were held simultaneously at the State level in three (all non-Congress) States and a series of electoral adjustments—mainly with the DMK and the CPI—diminished the scope of the encounter in the parliamentary election between the ruling Congress and the opposition parties. (Out of 517 contested seats in the Lok Sabha the party contested only 442 as against the practice of the undivided Congress to contest almost all the seats in previous elections.)

Despite these modifications and the adoption of a cautious approach by the ruling Congress (seen also in the selection of candidates in which old faces were more often than not preferred to new ones and a secta-

rian approach was adopted to ensure block support from certain communities), the campaign took on the character of an all out confrontation between Congress and anti-Congress and the results turned out to be as unexpected as in 1967, putting the ruling party back to its position of dominance on almost the same footing as in the first three general elections.<sup>1</sup>

Underlying the seemingly sharp contrast in the final result of the 1967 and 1971 elections—anti-Congressism getting an edge over Congress in the former and a revitalised Congress dealing a crushing blow to non-Congress parties in the latter—there is in fact a striking continuity in voting trends as revealed by empirical studies. In both elections the electorate showed a greater consciousness of the issues at stake and a readiness to evaluate parties by their record in government. Both elections signified a general weakening of vote banks and the power of traditional village leaders in vote getting. Both elections registered a growing mobilisation of the vast periphery of the poor and the 'wea-

1. The Congress Party secured 364 (out of 489) seats in the Lok Sabha in 1952, 371 (out of 494) in 1957 and 361 (out of 494) in 1962. In 1967 there was a sharp decline to 283 (out of 520). In 1971 the new Congress got 352 (out of 518) seats. The percentages work out to 74.44 in 1952, 75.10 in 1957, 73.08 in 1962, 54.42 in 1967 and 67.95 in 1971.

ker sections' that had remained apathetic or fearful during the first decade after independence and had gradually begun to be mobilised by new political formations on the right and the left, first in 1962 (with the emergence of the Swatantra) and then in 1967 (when the SSP, the CPM and the Jana Sangh made big inroads into Congress vote).

The so-called 'awakening of the masses' in 1971 in response to the call for *garibi hatao* was less sudden and dramatic than a superficial reading of aggregate results in 1971 would indicate: it is a process that had started almost a decade ago, gaining ground after the debacle in the Indo-Chinese war when Nehru's grip over the Indian people began to loosen, showed its first manifestation in three prestigious parliamentary bye-elections in 1963<sup>2</sup> and a new sense of power of Parliament and opposition parties vis à vis the government, led to the phenomenon of anti-Congressism under the smart and chiselling leadership of men like Lohia, made vital economic issues and popular discontent salient to party competition, and showed its first large-scale effect in the routing of the Congress Party in the 1967 election.

The importance of the March 1971 election lay less in any dramatic reversal of basic political trends as in the consolidation of the ground forces that had been already released over the last several years by a new kind of leader who, after a period of low key encounter with an aging generation of party managers, at last found a role and an identity for herself.

In the event, the slowly crystallising issue orientation of the

voters was cleverly mobilised in the cause of political stability, their tendency critically to evaluate governmental record was turned against the miserable performance of anti-Congress coalitions and the old guard of the Congress itself, anti-Congressism was turned into anti-bossism, and Indira Gandhi emerged (like her father during the fifties) in the necessary dual role that any leader aspiring to dominate this vast continent of simmering problems and unresolved conflicts of interest must perform. It is the role of being at one and the same time the leader of the government and the leader of dissent; an authority symbol that also incorporated in its appeal the symbolism of change and progress.

In thus stealing the thunder out of the sails of the opposition, Mrs. Gandhi was at once able to dislodge the old guard in her own party and deal with the challenge posed by the opposition parties. In effect, the Congress under Mrs. Gandhi took over the task that the opposition parties had begun in 1967 and made it the basis of its new found power.

Such a continuity of basic trends—such an usurpation of anti-Congressism for consolidating the power of the Congress itself—was, however, achieved through a striking change in the style and tenor of national politics. It was a continuity that was assured by admitting a major shift within the pre-existing consensus—a shift in the meaning and significance of politics, in the direction of State policy, in the structure of political power and in the importance of ordinary citizens and their welfare in the legitimacy and survival of the ruling elite.

Hitherto, an election was looked upon by competing elite groups and parties as a game which was almost an end in itself; power was pursued for its own sake and what mattered

was success in numbers. Never before the 1971 poll was an election fought around a 'mandate' which combined an appeal for political stabilisation with a commitment to basic policy goals expressed in simple and clear terms. It was a mandate that was going to be held out to the governing elite for measuring its performance and record in office during the next five years.

The people of India, by endorsing the mandate for which they were approached, had once again voted for stability and consolidation of the functioning political system and had boosted the sagging morale of the ruling elite. But this time it was not just a response based on unquestioning loyalty (in 1967 they had shown that such loyalty could not be taken for granted) but rather a conditional response, on the basis of a promise that the ruling party had itself laid down. It was the promise of performance. And it was no longer a vague promise but one that was based on specific undertakings—removal of poverty, inequality and injustice; provision of employment, stable prices, minimum nutritional levels, cheap education, and welfare and security for the nation's children. By basing its appeal for electoral confirmation on these promises, the governing elite had made its authority mandatory.<sup>3</sup>

Commitment to a mandate has another implication which is likely to have important consequences for the balance of effective political power in the

2. For a flavour of the anti-Congress tide and the conditions that led to it, see the studies of these three bye-elections—Amroha, Farrukhabad and Rajkot—in Occasional Papers I of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, *Party Systems and Election Studies*, New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1967.

3. The Oxford English Dictionary, defines a mandate as 'A command, order, injunction'. In reference to politics it is 'The instruction as to policy, supposed to be given by the electors to a parliament...'. In Burke's telling formulation, mandates can be interpreted as instruments 'for deposing sovereigns'. The term, as it is used in politics, dates back to the famous French *mandat* in 1774, fifteen years after that the Revolution took place. The term has thus had ominous beginnings and the original connotation has not completely worn off despite the frequent and loose use of the term in recent times.

country. Whereas the voters as a whole participated in the election that confirmed the mandate, the role of watching out on how the government is in fact performing is likely to be exercised by the more articulate and informed stratum of the population—usually composed of the educated middle class, organised labour in the cities and the urban intelligentsia and opinion leaders. This class which had been denuded of its power over the last decade or so as a result of the numerical preponderance of the rural masses and the emergence of the rural elite to positions of power, has once again come into its own as a result of the recent election.

It is noteworthy that the appeal of Mrs. Gandhi and her platform brought back the urban middle class which had hitherto been alienated from the Congress Party into supporting the new Congress. The rallies of student youth, taxi and scooter drivers, unionised labour and the unemployed that 'marched' in the capital and wherever the Prime Minister went provided the catalytic points from which the support for her party was mobilised. This class is going to enjoy an increasing leverage in Indian politics and it is likely to exercise this leverage on the basis of the record of the government in fulfilling the mandate.

As this also happens to be the class from which the leaders of dissenting movements and protest behaviour come and as the processes of urbanisation and modernisation have produced an increasing concentration of this class in metropolitan areas (the latest Census figures bring this out quite clearly), it is likely that judgement on the new government's record will be expressed in the same resounding voices as greeted the campaign and the result of the election.

This is not to say that the rural electorate is going to stay

passive. Indeed, there is increasing evidence that the rural masses are likely to demand the price of their loyalty and to judge the government's claim to their continued support by its record in office; and that the dichotomy between rural and urban is fast becoming a thing of the past. The 'green revolution' has on the one hand produced a self-confident gentlemanly class which is becoming quite sophisticated in political and administrative matters and, on the other hand, led to a greater visibility and consciousness of class and caste cleavages which are likely to accentuate tension and produce a large base for demands towards performance in the articulation of which radical image-building and movements of dissent and disorder will play an increasing part.

The 'politicization' to which both these will lead—in which the March 1971 election and its highly simplified and easy to comprehend slogan of 'garibi hatao' played a catalytic role—will borrow increasingly from typically urban symbols of protest and disapproval and begin to accept the leadership of more literate, urbanised, economically distressed and politically marginal people—both within and outside the ruling party.<sup>4</sup>

All in all, then, the first three months of the year crystallised and brought to a new plateau the

changes taking place in the style and temper of Indian politics over the last few years. This took place in terms of a more firm and precise commitment to programmatic goals than ever before, under a dynamic leader and a rejuvenated party, and through a new level of image-building which signalled a different phase in the country's political evolution. What took place was by no means sudden. It was a response to almost a decade of questioning and slow shifts in policy, but it was more definitive than ever before.

The March election swept off all earlier alibis, brought dramatically to an end the older generation of leadership and political style, and ushered in a new period of stability, a five-year mandate and the promise of new programmes, new faces and new vitality. It self-consciously admitted the grim challenge that lay ahead by underscoring the need to execute a promised mandate but interpreted the challenge as providing an opportunity for the country and its rulers. If 1970 was a year of drift and was dominated by 'too much opposition, too little government' and a general mood of gloom and despair when nothing seemed to work, 1971 opened with an event which brought an end to this drift and despair and raised high hopes, a majority government in saddle, and an accent on performance.

Soon after the election, there took place another dramatic development that deeply affected Indian politics and forced the country to take a fresh look (which was long overdue) at its foreign policy and at its position in the fast changing regional and global configurations of power. The revolt of Bangla Desh, the atrocities committed by Pakistan's mili-

4. The demonstration of support for the ruling Congress and its policies that radicals within the party have from time to time mounted in a show of strength against opposition parties (by mobilising train and truck loads of 'supporters' from the rural areas around the capital) is itself a double-edged weapon. The professional class of 'mobilisers' that this will give rise to can well turn against the very leader who employed them in the first instance. These demonstrations underline a style of politics that it may become increasingly difficult to control. The hoodliganism in Calcutta in which all parties—including the ruling Congress and the police itself—have actively participated is a case in point.

5. See my article, 'More Opposition', in the last Annual Number (*India 1970*) of *Seminar*, No. 137.

tary regime on a majority of its population, the resulting avalanche of population migration from across India's eastern borders, and the anaemic response of the international community to one of history's greatest human tragedies—concomitant with a fast changing balance of great power relations in the region—forced this country to a halting but nonetheless definite modification of its traditional posture in world affairs and a cautious entry into the world 'power game'.

**T**he treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union underscored this shift and ushered in a new phase in India's international posture. The period following the treaty has posed important problems of strategy in respect of preserving and enlarging India's autonomy and manoeuvrability in regional and world politics. Here, too, the country faced a new level of admission of challenge to its well-being and security and a new level of political commitment. Here, too, there was evidence of a change in style and temper and a situation which called for steady performance, the non-fulfilment of which may well lead to the undoing of all that this nation stood for. The entry of China in the United Nations and the Security Council in October further underlined this need for steady performance in the new context of power relations generally and the immediate issue of Bangla Desh in particular.\*

With these two events—the parliamentary election and

Bangla Desh—and their mutual interplay, India can be said to have moved into a period, the chief characteristic of which is going to be neither stability for its own sake nor change for its own sake, nor some overall pursuit of vague and unspelt goals, but something both more ambitious and more concrete. The common accent was on performance, on the need to devise clear-cut policies on the basis of choice between alternatives, on the ability to evolve leadership and institutional capabilities that produce sustained output administratively and politically, and on the capacity in the new political and administrative elite to use intelligently available information and knowledge and expertise for these tasks.

In many ways, this was a new kind of undertaking both in domestic and foreign policies, with little sustained experience to fall back upon. The earlier institutional resources and historic loyalties were getting exhausted, the old leadership and organisational structures had practically folded up, the negative resources (like the 'cold war' externally and the 'rural cushion' internally) had lost their relevance, the problems that the new government faced had to a considerable extent to be re-defined, and the general need was for new strategies of nation-building and international relations.

**I**n a way, this availability of a vast arena of new manoeuvrability posed a tremendous opportunity, especially as there was a stable authority at the centre, a leader with nationwide appeal and an atmosphere of enthusiasm among both political ranks and the intellectual

and technocratic elite of the country. But it was also an opportunity that *had* to be utilized. There was no longer the option of relaxing into inaction and complacency. The country had somehow managed to come through the 'dangerous decade' of the sixties while still maintaining, despite a series of crises, its political system intact and without greatly losing its self-confidence and dignity as a nation. At the same time, the sixties had not been, unlike the fifties, a decade of marked progress and success.

**I**n effecting the change from this situation of drift and ambiguity, the country was now entering its most challenging decade both as a nation and as a political system. This survival from a decade of danger into one of a growing challenge of commitment and performance characterised the drama of 1971—from the electoral verdict of March to the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty in August, and beyond these are the drums of a war-like situation, on the one hand, and the signals of rising prices and falling industrial output, on the other, began to squeeze leadership resources into a sombre realization of the long and narrow road that lay ahead.

A year—and a decade—so heralded was bound to disappoint. It is easier to talk of performance than to perform. The former depends on the ability to pronounce vague and sweeping slogans and engage in bold and persistent image-building; the latter demands the capacity to translate this imagery into precise policy choices and then to go ahead and make the choices and back them up by concrete actions. This is easier said than done. There are three other considerations to bear in mind before expressing one's opinion on the performance of the new government. First, six months is too short a period (the new government was formed in March; this article is being

#### \*Post Script

Between the time the article was written and the time it was sent to press, the country had stolen the initiative in respect of Bangla Desh, thanks to the Prime Minister's intense diplomatic effort at isolating Pakistan and backing up the liberation forces in Bangla Desh. Faced by a major crisis which ultimately led to a war, the country had once again been mobilised for an all out effort. This could well herald a new phase in our external politics which went far beyond Bangla Desh. In a matter of months, the country could—provided relevant thinking and policy planning took place—move

from a position of ambivalence and a dependent stance to one of real autonomy and power. The importance of Bangla Desh, thus, lay in this opportunity for renewal and revitalization in the policy process as a whole. There was little indication of this as yet as everyone was too preoccupied with the immediate events.

written in October) to sit on judgement on a government saddled with a massive backlog of issues. While it is true that much depends on the start that is made and the initiative and energy shown right at the beginning, one can only base one's evaluation on the basis of leads that certain actions, or lack of them, provide in respect of basic parameters of performance.

**S**Second, as indicated above, both the nature of domestic commitment following the electoral mandate and the new phase in our international relations produced tasks in the performance of which the new generation of leadership had little experience to fall back upon. It was only in the fifties (going upto 1962) that the political and administrative structure of this country was engaged in the making and execution of policy on a large scale, and this was largely due to the initiative and vision of Nehru. The whole of the sixties—with the single and powerful exception of the 'new agricultural strategy', to which may be added the articulation of a workable compromise on the language issue—was a decade of virtual non-performance on the policy front.

By the end of the sixties the country faced a backlog of such serious issues in a large number of spheres that a completely new approach to policy planning and implementation was called forth. The need was for a far more concrete and diversified handling of problems on the basis of available knowledge and research, and anticipatory wisdom that followed from this knowledge, rather than either taking a plunge without thinking through the consequences that were likely to prove costly and embarrassing, or allowing matters to drift on some presumption of automatic progress. This called for the development of a policy elite and a policy apparatus for which there was

little experience to fall back upon.

Hitherto, performance had followed a slow and routinised course and real shifts in policy and quickening of performance took place only in response to serious crises as in the fields of agriculture and language policy. With the new phase in Indian politics, such a passive approach could not any longer be relied upon. Also, the 'entry into the power game' that came with the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty and the imminent disintegration of Pakistan brought both foreign policy and domestic politics to a new level of engagement. Again, there was little past experience in perceiving and managing this new dimension of domestic-international linkages.<sup>6</sup>

**T**Third, there was, during the last six months, just too much pressure of a day to day kind—and too many compulsions released from outside the policy frame—for the new government to think through various problems of policy planning and anticipatory actions on the basis of a well thought out scheme of priorities. Soon after the election, the Prime Minister did take off to Simla for a brief holiday but in what proportion she combined rest and reflection, and how much her staff and advisors had prepared the ground for the latter, is not quite clear. This particular aspect of building a major reflective component in the policy process is crucial to all modern governments but, again, there is little in our political tradition and our

machinery of government to assure this.

**M**eanwhile, there has been just too much pre-occupation with day to day pressures (including for members of the Prime Minister's Secretariat who, with their pithy numbers, seem to be as overworked as everyone else). The result has been fragmented and ad hoc decision-making in the face of the demands of immediate events—Bangla Desh and the refugee problems, the problem of West Bengal and Calcutta, a sharp decline in industrial growth and the need to make short term modifications (and even reversals) in policy, a mounting deficit and rising prices and the effort to present a bold face to the public, factional conflicts in one PCC after another, and the perennial inflow into the capital of foreign visitors and the perennial outflow of ministers to foreign capitals to earn 'goodwill' for the country.

The Prime Minister was constantly busy, the Planning Minister was asked to start on a clean slate and had also to get himself elected (apart from lending a helping hand in the Telengana tangle), the new Planning Commission had not yet got its moorings, the transfer of important units and functions between ministries caused endless confusion, and many of the States were still going through new factional and party realignments. The agenda of the day for the key elite of the country was decided by what happened yesterday rather than what should be done tomorrow—and in the months ahead. There was also too great a stress on the initiative of one person—Mrs Gandhi—who herself was carrying too heavy a load to do justice to every important task.

Now, despite these various constraining factors and disabilities—too short a time, lack of

6. It is interesting that the most concerned and deliberated approach during 1971 was in respect of external policy—again responding to a situation of crisis. Should we always wait for a crisis to develop an effective policy? On the reply to this question depends our ability to evolve an adequate framework of policy planning and performance.

prior experience and day to day pressure of events—and the explanations they may provide for a less than adequate response to the challenge posed by the March election, there is no escape from the fact that the performance of the new government has so far been rather poor and tardy so far as the domestic scene is concerned. The first three months of excitement and a bold acceptance of national challenge were followed by six months of disjointed action, uncoordinated pronouncements by leading members of the government, a not infrequent evasion of hard issues and in general a tendency to find scapegoats and engage in tiresome rhetoric, a slipping back into the comforts of office and status on the part of most ministers and key civil servants (including most of the 'new faces' that Mrs. Gandhi had brought in), and a widespread lack of sensitivity to the political consequences of inaction and drift—even after all that the country and the Congress Party has gone through. There is not much that is clear and definitive to record in respect of these six months.

Several initiatives were, no doubt, taken during the year. First steps towards a reorientation of the Planning Commission, the technical ministries and the public sector were taken. The government initiated moves to create a suitable climate of industrial relations by sponsoring conferences with labour leaders. The crisis in industrial productivity was sought to be tackled through detailed investigation into the problems facing the major industries. Individual ministries and agencies showed signs of activity—mini steel plants, further steps in improving exports, better bargaining in international trade agreements, studies to improve capacity utilization, a more rational and less cumbersome licensing policy, and a broadening of financial assistance into small scale sectors and mofussil

centres through the nationalised banks. Schemes for providing jobs for the unemployed and the landless were formulated. Efforts were made to handle the problem of Calcutta on a fresh footing.

The Prime Minister took the initiative for reorganising the Congress Party in the States and the districts. Chavan sought to establish new working relations with the State governments in respect of financial discipline and coordination. The new Planning Commission began to explore ways and means of improving plan formulation by involving lower levels of the federal hierarchy. Towards the end of the year another educationist was appointed to the Education Ministry.

Much, then, was initiated. And yet it was all done in a disjointed and haphazard manner. There was no determined follow-up on any front, little by way of scanning of policy alternatives that were openly discussed and for which clear solutions were found, no real clinching of decisions by the top leadership, little evidence of thinking in perspective and beyond immediate pressures, and on the whole an inadequate effort to create a general climate of confidence and trust. There was little that was done by way of utilizing the external threat for mopping up the domestic scene, demanding discipline and 'sacrifice' from various strata of the population, raising fresh resources, eliminating a lot of administrative deadwood and streamlining the machinery of government for fulfilling domestic purposes. If anything, the evidence was of the reverse kind—using the external burden as an explanation of failure on the domestic front.

As the months went by, there was more a sense of disillusion-

7. Even the minor levies that were imposed in October were presented with great apology and as a 'temporary measure'.

ment than buoyancy—including among members of the establishment—and the persisting tendency to raise false controversy by reference to 'radical' slogans continued to distract attention in Parliament and party forums. The result was that each of the individual steps outlined above, while meant to open an area of initiative, turned out to be a study in frustration.

Such an atmosphere of frustration and disappointment revived the sport in which political and intellectual circles in the capital have always revelled. Inspired stories to drive a wedge between close colleagues in government, formulation and propagation of legislative proposals that carried cheap appeal, blocking of critical communication channels, an atmosphere of rumour-mongering, and indulgence in both crude and subtle sychophancy at fairly high levels appeared to infect the era of 'new politics' with the old virus of personalised and court politics.

It is creditable that the top leadership was on the whole able to preserve its cohesion and integrity in spite of this fouling of the air but firm steps to stamp out such an atmosphere and establish the credibility and collective character of the ruling team have yet to be taken. Without this basic capability at the highest level, it is difficult to see how a comprehensive and coordinated execution of a major agenda of tasks is possible.

On the other hand, we are not inclined to either take the view that Mrs. Gandhi and her government do not mean business or, on the other hand, endorse the view that has wide currency that the job cannot be done except through a major upheaval in the 'system'. The March election provided as much of a breakthrough as any aspiring power group would need—it gave a mandate, produced a government with a fairly comfortable tenure and established a leader in a position of unques-

tioned authority. Much of the deadwood had been swept aside, an atmosphere of cooperation from hitherto intransigent elements was made available and the articulate sections of the public was willing to allow the new leadership scope for proving their worth and fulfilling their promises.

Along with the deadwood from the past, past alibis for non-performance were also swept aside. A lot of mist had thus been cleared up and a major opportunity opened up for translating the Indian vision of democratic nation-building into reality. What the election achieved was a refreshing contrast to the political turmoil and breakdowns in large parts of the developing world.

**T**he leadership ought to ponder over the causes of less than adequate response to such a situation and what can be done to arrest the present anaemia. Bangla Desh may have produced a certain financial burden, but it provides no reason for a lack of drive towards domestic economic and political performance. 'Bureaucracy' and its deadening structures and traditions were often mentioned as causes for failure and they did indeed make their appearance from time to time—in the refusal of public sector officials to make their career in it, in the grim resistance to all attempts at bringing qualified 'outsiders' to key jobs, in the melodrama of the Gan-guli affair—but the problem is surely not as gross and mysterious as all that. All that it calls for are certain specific and firm measures to mobilise the requisite administrative effort. There are enough indications to suggest that such effort will find widespread support, including among the new generation of civil servants.

Similarly, opposition parties may produce some noise but actually they hardly pose any obstacles in governmental functioning. Many other alibis like

political instability or communal violence—or a bad monsoon—were also not available for the political and administrative cadres to find refuge behind. Even the Naxalites were on the run. Where then must one look for reasons for inadequate performance?

The problems that now prevent performance are actually of quite a different order. We know what needs to be done. It is all there in the 'mandate'. The main task is to restructure the instruments of the political will in a manner that provides both cohesion to the process of policy making and direction to its translation into action. This has two main aspects—reorganising the structure and distribution of power and authority; and evolving an adequate machinery of deliberation and action. The former involves the political wing of the government (the ministries) and the organisational structure of the ruling party; the latter involves intelligent and purposive interaction between technical expertise and the typical administrative bureaucracy.

Crucial to both the tasks are the real actors, the individual bodies, the creatures of will and intelligence. The challenge of 1971 and the decade that it heralded is, in concrete terms, the challenge of having the right people on the right jobs, who would then mobilize existing structures and refashion them for the new tasks, act as cohesive teams across professional boundaries—politicians, administrators, policy planners and technicians—and together provide proof of performance step by step.

**I**t is here perhaps that the greatest failing of the new government can be located. The necessary bodies are just not there. The ones that are there (with a few exceptions) fail to inspire. Deliberation on policy making is still carried out in a fragmented manner with either

the technical expert or the lay bureaucrat or the rare politician who knows his mind taking important decisions, but never is this done in a concerted manner. And the temptation on the part of the ministers—including most of the new entrants brought in by the Prime Minister in her effort to bring dynamism in governmental functioning—to evade hard choices that involves ministerial responsibility is still very high.

**T**his is one problem—lack of the right men in the right places. Lack of appropriate *bodies*. The need to infuse new talent—ministers, key civil servants, technocrats and professional advisors—should be considered as an issue of the highest priority. The second and closely related problem is that of an inadequate machinery of policy making. The March 1971 election ushered in a period when the initiative had again passed to the Centre and within the central government to its political core. The manner in which the Prime Minister has gone about organising the Council of Ministers—with a small core of weighty politicians and technocrats who are supposed to devote themselves to their specific assignments—is appropriate to the new condition. But, there is as yet little evidence of effecting a corresponding framework of decision-making and policy formulation.

The Prime Minister's Secretariat is too small to be effective on the deliberative side, the Cabinet Secretariat has yet to develop its new identity and role in the new scheme of things, the Planning Commission is too lightweight to carry conviction (it was a mistake to have kept out the principal cabinet ministers from it), the committee structure in the government has not begun to function as a vital agency of coordination between these deliberative and information gathering units and the subject ministries where the various tasks are to be carried



out, and the National Development Council which is the chief link in the federal decisional process has hardly begun to function effectively.

There is need to formulate an effective strategy in respect of these instruments of strategcraft and their inter-relationship for the single purpose of translating vague goals into unambiguous policy proposals, utilising available knowledge and research for this, preventing loss of perspective in the course of attending to day to day tasks, and identifying new problems and obstacles as they appear on the horizon and evolving anticipatory policies for dealing with them.

The performance on both these counts—picking the right men and evolving an appropriate machinery of policy planning—has so far been very unsatisfactory. There is, of course, a third problem which has added to the general climate of non-performance. This is the ineffectiveness so far of the process of coordination between the Centre and the States.

No matter how intelligent the policy process and the motivation of the main people at the Centre—which of course are both conspicuous by their absence—the real tasks will have to be carried out in the States and the districts. Here, the politics of federalism has so far been more negative than positive. Demands for State autonomy and greater access to resources, some of which are quite legitimate, seem to be voiced as ends in themselves and unrelated to policy performance. Chief Ministers and administrative functionaries in a number of States—as well as the various political parties and in some States the Congress Party itself—have taken on a non-cooperative and indifferent stance.

Despite the patient and persistent efforts of Y. B. Chavan and

C. Subramaniam, Reserve Bank overdrafts are still the order of the day, non-plan expenditures keep soaring, there is general reluctance to mobilise the requisite resources through taxation and other measures, and worse than all this, there is general timidity and hesitation in undertaking legislation and administrative steps needed to fulfil the promise of *garibi hatao*. It is necessary to change all this and to mobilise the lower levels of India's federal polity towards fulfilling the 'mandate'. It is only after that is achieved that any serious consideration of providing more autonomy and resources to the States can take place.

This is where the next round in political and administrative reorganisation comes. The Prime Minister ought to play as dominant a role in the State elections of 1972 as in the Parliamentary election of 1971. The 'mandate' must be re-sought. The Congress Party ought to field as many candidates as possible and choose the candidates with care. There is need to pose the issue quite squarely before the people: unless the ruling party at the Centre is returned to power in the States, it is going to be extremely difficult to fulfil the promises contained in the 1971 mandate.

The diffidence and nervousness in the ranks of the ruling Congress engendered by reverses in a few bye-elections in the States ought not to allow the mood of 'let us rule the Centre and it does not matter who rules the States'. Nor should the 'theory of voter sophistication' (the view that the voters have shown an ability to discriminate between parliamentary and State elections and vote for different parties at the two levels) be allowed to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. With a proper strategy and requisite communications, even State and local elections can be mobilised in favour of national policy goals. It is necessary to

have cooperative governments at the State level in at least a majority of States. It will greatly facilitate and speed up performance on the electoral mandate.

Mrs. Gandhi should take up this task in her own hands. The Congress Party organisation is in shambles almost everywhere and it will be necessary to appeal to the people on the basis of an image and a message rather than simply relying on a vote catching organisation. On the other hand, such an approach will bring into the Congress Party's fold—as it did in 1971—a new rank and file on the basis of which the much needed reorganisation of the party will take place. In carrying through the process of purging and cleansing the party structure of discredited and ineffective elements to a successful end, the 1972 State elections should play an important role.

Of course, there is no need to wait for the outcome of the State elections. Much needs to be done and can be done in the meanwhile. There is always the danger in this country to reduce all issues into exercises in political arithmetic and factional interplay. This aspect of the situation can be overdone and indeed prove self-defeating. The formulation and implementation of the 'new agricultural policy' between 1965 and 1967, under conditions not as politically propitious as at present, has already shown how a determined policy elite can patiently work towards a coordinated effort in an area which was a 'State subject'. Between now and March 1972 much can be done on the policy front, in getting the right bodies and evolving the right structures, which will not only provide proof of performance to the people but also enable the Prime Minister and the Congress leaders in the various States to approach the people for 'renewing the mandate'.

The need is for a series of policy announcements between now and the Assembly elections



not in the language of vague slogans and meaningless repetition of 'radical' jargon which have already become counter-productive, but in the form of concrete steps spelt out in an unambiguous manner and communicated to the public through a series of briefings. Such announcements should both commit the State governments to precise tasks and carry conviction with the public that the ruling party means business. In turn, such conviction will depend on what is done by the policy elite at the Centre in the next few months. The atmosphere provided by Bangla Desh and the great confidence that has been generated in its wake ought to be utilised for forcing the pace of the policy process in the months ahead.

The people of India are not asking for the impossible. Their demands are rather modest—some economic improvements, some relief for the poor and the unemployed, manageable prices, availability of unadulterated supply of essential commodities. They would also be satisfied if the government understood some of their concerns—removal of corruption in public officials, less ostentation in public expenditures, punishment of unethical trade practices, less violence in the cities, a less repressive police, a more responsive clerkdom. These are by no means large expectations. The sooner the noise of slogan-mongering is replaced by evidence of small but concrete performance, the more conviction the government will carry with the public.

Let the approach to the next electoral round be conceived in such a purposive manner, namely, as a complement to the 1971 parliamentary election, and for fulfilling the mandate in a more concrete and unhesitating manner. This should also mean that now is the time for making key decisions and communicating them to the general public, evolving an appropriate machinery of policy planning and

execution and, more important than everything else, inducting the right people into decision-making positions. Failing such an approach, there is not much hope for the mandate. And if the mandate is not carried through at least in its essentials, there is not much hope for the country.

Much was achieved during 1971—the year provided a striking contrast to the anaemic confabulations of 1970. A stable government was in saddle at the Centre. The Prime Minister had established herself as a leader with a national appeal and a forward-looking image. A new organisational structure for the dominant party was in the making although its precise nature was not clear. Externally, the country had launched on a new course that promised—provided the right steps were taken in pursuance of the new plunge—to solve the Pakistan problem for good and enable the country to gain a position of strength in the region.

On the whole, there was an atmosphere of optimism, expectancy, challenge. Yet it was precisely this shift in the overall climate of politics (brought about in a strikingly short period of time) that revealed basic weaknesses in the country's administrative and political structure and highlighted major lacunae in the framework of policy making and implementation. The country had been charted on a new course. There was no possibility of a going back on it. But the real tasks had only now begun and there was little evidence of a proper grasp of what was entailed—of what it really meant to fulfil the mandate and the trust that the people had placed in the new government. It was by providing this uncertain and ambivalent start to the seventies—from the 'dangerous decade' to the 'decade of promise'—that the year 1971 signalled the crossroads of India's democratic polity.

# Asian power balance

GIRILAL JAIN

THE rise of Bangla Desh as an independent country, the break-up of Pakistan, the demonstration by India that it has both the will and the capacity to act firmly in defence of its national interests in defiance, if necessary, of international opinion, and Moscow's unwavering support for New Delhi have cumulatively transformed the Asian scene. While it will be somewhat rash to project the consequences of these developments

too far into the future, certain points appear evident.

If the United States and China intended, as seems more than likely on the basis of available evidence, to base their *detente* on the assumption that they can determine the future of Asia without much regard to the susceptibilities and interests of India and the Soviet Union, they will have to think again because New Delhi and Moscow can now legitimately claim that

there can be no enduring peace and stability in the region at their cost and without their co-operation.

**I**t is common knowledge that, since the early fifties, both the United States and China have looked upon Pakistan as a check on India and that they have used it to prevent this country from playing its national rôle in the area. They have found Islamabad so convenient an instrument that they have been more than ready to ignore the Pakistan army's ghastly crimes in East Bengal—the massacre of at least 500,000 people, rape of women of all ages, burning down of whole localities and villages and the deliberate uprooting of over 10 million persons—and to do their best to prevent the emergence of an Independent Bangla Desh.

Although one cannot be sure, it is possible that President Nixon would have reconciled himself to the break-up of Pakistan, albeit with regret in view of his past support for and association with the military establishment in Islamabad, if this had taken place before first, his secret and then open negotiations with Peking had made sufficient progress and led him to believe that the United States and China could work out an arrangement for Asia, specially south and south-east Asia, which would exclude not only India but also the Soviet Union. But, once Kissinger had visited Peking last July, the Nixon administration was convinced that the disintegration of Pakistan and the consequent increase in Indian influence must be stopped.

In view of its regional status and ambitions, China's stake in a united Pakistan has been even higher than America's. It adopted a relatively moderate line regarding the freedom struggle in East Bengal and India's support to it so long as it felt that, in spite of the intolerable burden placed on this country as a result of the influx of millions

of refugees, New Delhi would not be able to act with sufficient determination. It became positively belligerent towards India, the Awami League and the Mukti Bahini as it discovered to its horror some time in the middle of November that it had misjudged India's mood and determination. Similarly, it stepped up its vilification campaign against the Soviet Union when it found that the latter would back India to the hilt in its struggle to liberate Bangla Desh.

Peking, which has derived considerable advantage from Pakistan's unremitting hostility towards India and this country's discomfiture in the brief border war in the Himalayas in 1962, could also have calculated that it could successfully promote insurrection in the north-eastern region if the ten million refugees did not return to their homes and their presence produced unmanageable tensions. As things have turned out, Pakistan has broken into two; the refugees are returning to an independent Bangla Desh; the pro-Chinese groups in north-eastern India have disintegrated and Mrs. Indira Gandhi has emerged as a major world figure in her own right. South-east Asian countries cannot but take note of these developments.

**I**ndia has, of course, a long way to go in respect of economic development before it can fully come into its own. But it has got over some major obstacles in its search for a proper place in the region and the world and it has done so at a time when the position in the whole of Asia is fluid and when China, in spite of the surface calm, is convulsed by purges in the leadership. In view of the disappearance from public view of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's heir designate, Marshal Lin Biao, the Chief of the Army Staff, the Commander of the Air Force and the Navy's Political Commissar, all of them members of the supposedly all-

powerful politburo of the Communist Party, this cannot be said to be a harsh and unfair judgment.

**A**s for the Soviet Union, it did not have a viable, reliable and meaningful ally in Asia till it concluded the treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation with India on August 9 last year. Even after the pact, it was almost universally assumed that Moscow would not be able, in fact not even willing, to see India through the conflict forced on it by the Pakistan army's genocide in East Bengal. The statements of Soviet leaders, endorsing Pakistan's 'integrity' and Islamabad's claim that developments in East Bengal were its internal affair and emphasising the need for a peaceful solution, inevitably strengthened the view that Moscow would use the treaty to frustrate rather than help promote India's interests. This impression was finally dispelled only after a full-scale war had broken out in the sub-continent on December 3 and the Soviet Union not only used its veto thrice in the U.N. Security Council to block U.S.-sponsored and U.S.-supported resolutions, which were thoroughly repugnant to India, but also issued firm warnings to China and the United States against direct intervention, and moved some submarines and frigates of its Pacific Fleet towards the Bay of Bengal after the Seventh Fleet had sailed there in the midst of veiled threats by President Nixon against India.

The reasons which persuaded the men in the Kremlin to come down strongly and openly on the side of India can easily be surmised. During and after her visit to Moscow last October, Mrs. Gandhi left them in no doubt that she would act irrespective of their support or lack of it because the Pakistani Generals were not at all interested in finding an acceptable political solution in East Bengal and the Indian economy, polity

and society could not bear the strain of ten million refugees. They also recognised—the time of it is not quite clear—that failure to back India in its just struggle would bring the Soviet Union into contempt and greatly reduce, if not altogether destroy, the credibility of its power in Asia.

In any event, Soviet gains from India's success are considerable. The Soviet Union has acquired a new respectability in south and south-east Asia. Countries, which are concerned lest the U.S. withdrawal from the region encourage the Chinese to seek hegemony there, can now look with confidence to Moscow for support in their efforts to preserve their independence. The anti-Soviet trend in the Arab world is also likely to be halted as a result of the demonstration by the Kremlin of its willingness and capacity to stand by India in its hour of trial.

For over two years, western commentators have deliberately spread the erroneous impression that India has granted major facilities to the Soviet fleet at Visakhapatnam. This campaign can now be expected to gather momentum, specially in the United States because Nixon cannot justify his stupid decisions to call India an aggressor, lead a campaign against it in the United Nations and send the Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal except in terms of the alleged increase in Soviet influence in this country. But there is no good reason why New Delhi should be on the defensive. Instead, it should let it be known that it will take all steps it considers necessary for its security and the promotion of its legitimate interests.

India's actions will clearly depend on the policies of the United States and China. If they gang up; it will have no option but to cement its ties with the Soviet Union. If, on the other hand, they abandon their hegemonistic ambitions,

do not seek to rearm Pakistan and organise an anti-India and anti-Soviet Islamic front, and accommodate New Delhi's legitimate interests, it shall be only too glad to co-operate with them in establishing a stable peace in this part of the world.

In all probability, India would not have gone in for the treaty with the Soviet Union if the United States and China had not prevaricated on the issue of Bangla Desh and had put the Pakistani military junta on notice that it could not depend on them for support in its genocide. Instead, Washington maintained military supplies to Islamabad and China reaffirmed its support for the so-called sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan. Neither of these countries, it is true, adopted too strident a tone immediately. But neither of them left this country in any doubt that it would not be permitted to enforce a settlement in East Bengal which could persuade and enable the refugees to return.

This left Indian policy-makers with three choices—to swallow their pride, accept humiliation and deal with the refugee's problem as best they could even if it involved the disruption of their country's economy and polity, to act on their own with such support as they could obtain from the Soviet Union without a formal pact, and to take advantage of Moscow's desire to sign a treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation and thereby commit that great power to support whatever measures they thought and found necessary to take to deal with the crisis provoked by the Pakistan army's actions in East Bengal.

The choice was not easy and it was not made in a hurry. While many of us not directly responsible for the nation's security could and did take the view that the threat of direct Chinese involvement—no one could then even suspect that the

United States under President Nixon would take a thoroughly pro-Pakistan and anti-India attitude and go so far as to send a task force of the Seventh Fleet not only with a view to blackmailing this country but also to evacuating Pakistani troops from Bangla Desh—was minimal, Mrs. Gandhi and her advisers concluded, rightly in retrospect, that they needed much more leverage in Moscow that friendship without the binding commitment of a treaty could give them. Apparently, they had a clearer and better appreciation of the depth of U.S. and Chinese involvement with the Pakistani military junta and the world community's opposition to the break-up of any established State than their critics in the academic world. Incidentally, most opposition parties endorsed the Prime Minister's decision to sign the treaty on August 9 largely because they felt that the country needed a firm friend.

Even after having signed the treaty with the Soviet Union, India spared no effort to convince the United States and China that it was in no way directed against them. Thus, if they had realised even then that Pakistan was dead and acted accordingly, the importance of the treaty with the Soviet Union would have remained limited in Indian eyes. In fact, even now it is not too late for Washington and Peking to readjust their policies to make them conform to the new realities.

The factors which have brought the United States and China closer together are well known and need not be detailed here. Briefly, the U.S. decision to withdraw from Viet Nam has eliminated the main source of friction between the two countries because it marks the end of the American policy of military containment of China which began with the outbreak of the Korean war in 1950. Both are convinced that the Formosa issue can be resolved peacefully

in course of time. Both are concerned over the growing military power of the Soviet Union and the economic expansion of Japan. There is, in short, no fundamental clash of interest between Washington and Peking and the relations between them need not have become as antagonistic as they did in the past two decades if the ruling U.S. elite had a clear perception of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's nationalism which accounts for the break with the Soviet Union and elimination from the country's leadership of all those who took a doctrinaire view of economic development and international relations.

India has welcomed and will continue to welcome this *detente* provided it is assured that this is not intended to lead to a Sino-U.S. condominium in south and south-east Asia, that the two powers are willing to accommodate India's legitimate interests and that they are not so blinded by their hatred of the Soviet Union and this country as to wish to encourage a fundamentalist revivalism in Muslim countries so that they can come together on one platform and work directly against Moscow and New Delhi.

These fears are by no means unfounded because while the United States has as a rule befriended the most reactionary regimes in West Asia, the Chinese are determined to undermine the Soviet position in that region. Thus, if things do not change, the Soviet Union and India will inevitably have to work together in order to deal with the challenge.

It is self-evident that Japan will play an increasingly important role in shaping the new power balance in Asia once it gets over its psychological dependence on the United States and begins to act more independently than hitherto.

It is also obvious that Japan will need to readjust its rela-

tions with all the major powers with vital stakes in the region—the United States, the Soviet Union, China and India. While Tokyo's ties with Washington are likely to become less intimate and may even be exposed to considerable strain on account of economic rivalry and competition, those with the Soviet Union and China will in all probability improve in spite of its present distrust of them and their distrust of it. Tokyo has been singularly unimaginative in its handling of the crisis in the sub-continent. But this is largely the result of its old habit of following the U.S. lead.

It is difficult to be sure whether Japanese leaders were as shell-shocked as they showed themselves to be by President Nixon's decision to go to Peking and to force an upward revaluation of the yen to protect the U.S. market against Japanese goods. Apparently they were taken by surprise by the timing of these moves because they were not psychologically prepared for them though they should have known that an American attempt at *rapprochement* with China could be a logical corollary to the withdrawal from Viet Nam and that the United States could not possibly go on allowing them to accumulate bigger and bigger trade surpluses year after year.

The relevant question however is: how are the Japanese likely to react to the transformation of the Asian scene implicit in a Sino-U.S. *detente* and China's new diplomatic initiatives? Will there, for instance, be an upsurge of nationalist feelings leading to acquisition of nuclear weapons by Japan?

This is not inconceivable. But it still appears more likely that Japan will not rock the Sino-U.S. boat too rudely. Instead of hurling defiance at Washington and Peking, it is more likely to adopt a four-fold approach.

First, it will continue to depend on its economic strength

for influence in the region around it and beyond.

Secondly, it will maintain its present defence links with the United States and at the same time strengthen its own independent conventional military capability.

Thirdly, it will seek to normalise its relations with China though its services are no longer required to promote a dialogue between Peking and Washington. It may agree to invest substantial sums in China's development, specially in the field of minerals, and advance long-term credits to Peking to import capital equipment.

Finally, it will strengthen its links with the Soviet Union and may show greater interest in Moscow's proposals for joint projects in Siberia than it has done so far.

It is not yet possible to imagine a situation in which the Soviet Union will either encourage nuclear ambitions of the more nationalistic section of the Japanese ruling elite or agree to return the islands it seized in 1945 in order to draw Tokyo into its scheme for Asia. The Kremlin is bound to argue that there can be no guarantee that a Japan armed with nuclear weapons will not gang up with China and that the return of the islands to Japan will not encourage Peking to press its territorial demands on the Soviet Union.

On this reckoning, it seems fair to conclude that while Tokyo will step up its dealings with Moscow, essentially it will agree to function within the framework of the America-China-Japan triangle and that it will not try to upset the new power balance which the first two will be wanting to establish. This analysis suggests that the scope for Indo-Japanese co-operation may, as in the past, remain limited. But in this fast changing situation, this need not be taken for granted.

# The great breakthrough

SISIR GUPTA

THE year 1971 will go down in history as the year of a great Indian breakthrough in domestic and international politics. The elections of March 1971 restored central authority in Indian society and created conditions for a massive effort to bring about social change and economic development in the country. For nearly five years, political uncertainty and a sense of despair had bedevilled Indian public life. The emergence of Mrs. Gandhi as the universally accepted leader of this country created new hopes, particularly among the common people of India who only wanted to feel confident that the nation was moving in the right direction.

It is idle to pretend that any of India's basic problems has been resolved by the 1971 elections, except the one of recreating the moral and political

authority of the government at the Centre. But this itself is a major success from which India can proceed to register further successes in other fields. Only future historians will be able to assess whether India made the fullest possible use of this advantage or collapsed once again into its traditional habit of feeling contented with non-performance.

The historic achievements of India in the realm of international politics during 1971 are more impressive and it need not be left to the historians of the future to assess their significance. The breakdown of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangla Desh has liberated India from the debilitating effects of having to live in the enormously harmful environment that was imposed on the peoples of this sub-continent in 1947. Few other

nations of the world were called upon to live in peace with a State like Pakistan, few other peoples were asked to live in a State like it. Born with an unresolvable crisis of identity, Pakistan sustained itself in the short run through intense hostility towards India. In the long run, however, this proved self-defeating. It did not take more than a quarter of a century for the people of Pakistan to discover that hostility towards India was but a facade for erecting a highly unjust and inequitable social and political structure in their country.

The agony of India was not merely that it was being frequently forced to get involved in conflicts with a neighbouring country but also that basically any Indo-Pakistan conflict was a fratricidal one. With no other people in the world does India have as close and intimate relations as with those of what used to be Pakistan. And yet it is with that very country that it had to fight three wars in the first 25 years of its independence. The intense psychological strain generated by this fact and the grave internal implications of being locked up in an internecine conflict with Pakistan were apparent to all. India was compelled to go through this intensely tortuous phase of its history.

It is in 1971 that the people of Bangla Desh rose in revolt not only against the military *junta* of Pakistan but also the primitive concepts of nationhood which were embodied in the idea of a single Islamic State comprising two geographically separated wings. It is they who began to write with their blood a new chapter in the history of our peoples. It was India's task to stand by and help them in achieving their legitimate rights as a people.

In doing so, India was helping herself. The events in Bangla Desh have strengthened the basic values and attitudes on which India is trying to build

its society and modernize itself. The magnitude of the grim crisis that it had faced in the process may not be apparent to those who have lived through this phase. It is necessary to remember that the last attempt of the Pakistani military *junta* was to create a crisis for the whole sub-continent out of its own crisis and to bring down India along with itself.

The full implications of the emergence of Bangla Desh as an independent nation are yet to become clear and it may be worthwhile to try to enumerate some of the possible positive effects of this development. In the first place, it ends the pernicious two-nation theory and paves the ground for the emergence of really secular societies in all the three nations which now live in this area. No one in Bangla Desh can think of defining its nationalism in any but the most modern terms. This could not but underline to the people of West Pakistan the fact that they like others in the sub-continent must redefine their national identity in modern secular terms.

Within India itself, this could only have a salutary effect in refashioning attitudes of both the Hindu and the Muslim communalists of this country. For over 25 years, many Indian Muslims had suffered from a grave schizophrenia which made it difficult for them to find their rightful place in the Indian society. Liberated from the guilt feeling that he had once voted for the two-nation theory, the Muslim in India is now psychologically free to treat himself as an equal citizen of a modern secular society. Equally, the communal minded Hindus who were deriving sustenance from those mad years of the history of this sub-continent will now either readjust themselves to the new political culture of this region or make themselves totally irrelevant for the people. India's own efforts to secularize its society could

have never fully succeeded unless the societies of West Pakistan and Bangla Desh had also become secular.

Secondly, the emergence of Bangla Desh will have a great radicalizing influence on the politics of the entire sub-continent. Bangla Desh itself is the product of a revolution. And it is not until they have followed up their national liberation with the implementation of a blueprint for the creation of a new society in their land that the people of Bangla Desh will rest. They have already proved that a repressive authoritarian regime can be overthrown by the people and the lesson of Bangla Desh will hereafter be imbibed by those who run governments in this part of the world. The Government of Bangla Desh is also likely to set new examples in social reconstruction and these examples will act as a beckoning light to others who are striving for similar goals. West Pakistan can no more escape the logic of this development than others in this region.

In fact, the great political fall-out from the emergence of Bangla Desh will be on West Pakistan itself. It is inconceivable that the military rulers of Pakistan will ever be able to control the western wing. The legitimacy of their government has been destroyed beyond repair and although pseudo-radicals like Bhutto may manage to hold the centre of the stage for a little while, a much more fundamental process of radicalization will be ushered in by the sense of defeat that would permeate the elite in West Pakistan. Whether this will threaten the outdated authoritarian regimes further to the West or not, within West Pakistan itself, big and healthy changes are bound to occur. There will no doubt be efforts on the part of some to tag West Pakistan on to a new West Asian political system in which monarchs and dictators abound. But, these efforts are not likely to succeed

in view of the fact that West Pakistanis are far more modern and forward-looking in their outlook than the peoples who live across their western boundaries.

The third and the most important positive aspect of this development is that this restructuring of the sub-continent will create the necessary conditions for friendly and co-operative relations among all the nations of this region. The self-sustaining Indo-Pakistan balance was inhibiting the growth of any concept of fruitful co-operation among them. It was obstructing any attempt to build friendly relations among these countries on the basis of accepted principles of co-existence and non-interference in each other's affairs. The various States of this region can now proceed to draw up plans of economic co-operation to the mutual advantage of each one of them. The growth of freer trade itself will go a long way in improving the living conditions of the impoverished people of this area.

In the eastern region of the sub-continent, where life is almost sub-human, free exchange of goods between India and Bangla Desh can result in an immediate improvement in the situation. Economic considerations apart, there are hard political needs for these countries to pull together. For over 25 years since their independence, they have lived in an abnormal state of tension and conflict which retarded the progress of all of them. The conditions are now ready for bold attempts to devise schemes of political and economic co-operation of these countries. It is tragic that such co-operation could not be achieved before a massive fratricidal conflict in the sub-continent. But it is the lesson of the history of other peoples also that it is out of such conflicts that nations begin to become aware of their inter-dependence. In Europe itself, ideas of fruitful co-operation among nations could begin

to find expression only after fratricidal conflicts had illustrated the need for it.

The importance of this cannot indeed be exaggerated. Because we had got used to it, we had hardly ever realized how disastrously unproductive the relations among the South Asian countries were. Ideas of co-operation among nations may not have found fruition in many other parts of the world, but at least they have been afloat. Moreover, there is no other part of the world where a relationship like that between India and Pakistan was present. Even in South-east Asia where some conflicts were often taking place between neighbours, relations had never reached a point of total breakdown.

Because of the peculiar nature of Indo-Pakistan relations, no other nation in this region could ever think of intra-regional economic co-operation and each one of them began to tag itself on in both economic and political terms to others outside. This had retarded intra-regional trade and prevented even fruitful commodity agreements to the mutual advantage of countries with competitive economies.

Politically, there was little trust between one and the other. The Ceylonese vote in the General Assembly of the United Nations on the issue of the Indo-Pakistan war was symbolic of the state of international relations in this part of the world. The historic events of 1971 have brought about the need to reconsider the attitudes and approaches of every South Asian country to its neighbours.

Much will depend on how India's relations with Bangla Desh evolve in the future. Should these relations be conducted by both sides with care. India and Bangla Desh could provide to the others a model for similar bilateral co-operation which could eventually lead to multi-lateral co-operation in this region. It is obvious that India

and Bangla Desh will be bound by a number of agreements which would pave the ground for a friendly co-operative relationship between two sovereign States on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence.

It is time to point out that the leadership of India and Bangla Desh will have to carry a great burden on themselves in regulating this relationship. On India's part, it would be necessary continuously to reassure Bangla Desh that India's only interest is in safeguarding and promoting the sovereignty of Bangla Desh and only such co-operation will be conceived as would add to the capacity of Bangla Desh to protect its independence and to reconstruct its society, which alone would enable it to take its rightful place among the nations of the world. In Asia, Bangla Desh will be the fifth largest country. In the world as a whole, it will be the eighth. This is not a minor State and the international posture of Bangla Desh will be of great importance for the international community.

It is improbable that the leaders of Bangla Desh, hardened and steeled by their revolutionary experience, will not develop a world view which will put it very firmly on the side of the peoples who are struggling for greater equity and justice in the international society. Indeed, this is what would create the necessary background for co-operation between India and Bangla Desh. For India, Bangla Desh will be its largest neighbour, next only to China. The relations between India and that country maintained at a high level of friendship and co-operation will create a situation in which smaller neighbours will begin to realize that such co-operation would not mean the curtailment of their sovereignty in any manner.

For 25 years Pakistan had maintained its propaganda



against India and accused this country of being intransigent and arrogant towards its neighbours. Even if that utterly meaningless accusation was known to be a Pakistani contrivance to sustain itself, India's other neighbours had begun to show some distrust of this country. If a new pattern of relations in this area is to be built, it will have to be built on the base of immutable friendship between India and Bangla Desh.

**I**t is extremely wrong for any one either in India or abroad to think of the emergence of India as a 'dominant power' in the region. True, India happens to be the largest and the most powerful nation in this area. But no meaningful scheme of co-operation among nations can be sustained if a sense of equality is not cultivated among nations. Quite apart from what should or should not be done, it is obvious that India is not the kind of a country which can ever throw its weight around.

The history of India-Ceylon relations is a testimony to this fact. Ceylon was free to call upon India to help it in the hour of its crisis but it did not thereby lose the capacity to judge the merits of any issue on its own. Likewise, Nepal and Burma have found it much easier to deal with India on a basis of complete equality than with their other powerful neighbours. Therefore, the fear that interested nations are trying to create of a dominant India is utterly unfounded.

India's primary task is within the country. In fact, no neighbour of India has as many intricate social and economic problems to tackle. The leadership of India had only wanted to be left alone to tackle this task and it is because India was not being left alone that conflicts had arisen in this region.

This is not to suggest that the current events will not lead to some consequence for Asian and

world politics. Ever since 1962, India was being regarded by its friends and foes as a country of no consequence. That feeling will now yield place to a more objective assessment of India's strength and weakness. This itself will have some impact on international politics. Again, if this region is freed from internal conflicts, the capacity of external powers to intervene and influence developments here will be curtailed. Only those great powers who are prepared to put themselves on the right side of the historical process of the evolution of healthy co-operative relations among South Asian countries will have some influence here and not those who have been trying to sustain a pattern of intra-regional conflicts to save their own interests.

**F**or Asia, the new and higher level of stability in this region can only be a matter of hope. This great uncertainty about the future of Southern Asia would now have ended and smaller nations in other regions would have an additional source of hope that their sovereignty and independence would not be curbed by any great power machinations or by agreements among them to carve out spheres of influence.

It is in these and many other senses that the events of 1971 are of historic significance. In fact, for us who have lived through this period, it may be difficult to appreciate the magnitude of the task that we have accomplished. Not the least of our success is that we have now arrived as an independent nation and that the process of the consolidation of our political independence is now truly completed. It is true that what remains to be done internally is far more important and vastly more complex than what has been achieved externally. But, could we ever have even begun to resolve our internal problems without making our political independence as complete as it is now?

# New development strategy

C. T. KURIEN

THE development process in India has not yet become a mass movement: the development process cannot become effective until it becomes a mass movement. Such is the thesis of this paper.

It may appear that there is some confusion here. For, mass movement is only a method, it may be argued. To say that development cannot become effective till it is approached through a certain method may seem to be illogical, confusing ends with means. But what is the end of development unless it is people, the *masses* in our country? And if development is for the people it has to be by the people also. Here lies the connection between development and mass movement. Refusal to see this connection has been the greatest weakness of the development efforts in our country. Many of the problems that we are exercised over today can also be directly related to the failure to make development a people's movement—growing unemployment, increasing gulf between the rich and the poor. To these obvious issues must be added one more which again has resulted from the same malaise, the none-too-impressive increase in output.

All this may still look like putting the cart before the horse. Can we in fact find jobs for our

millions when our capital stock is so limited? Can a reduction of inequalities be brought about before an increase in output is achieved? And, can an increase in output be achieved without an initial *increase* in disparities? Can our socio-economic system generate and sustain a rate of growth more than what we have so far managed? In short, could we have done anything other than what we have done? These are all decent academic questions—'academic' in the respectable sense of the term. They arise from our commitment to change, but *orderly* change; from our concern for development, but *gradual* development; our eagerness to help the masses, but *in the long run*.

This kind of academic compassion for the lot of the masses is not without precedent in our history. There was a lot of it in the early stages of the national freedom movement. In fact, the parallelism is too striking to be mere coincidence. 'The New Society' (as Sardar K. M. Panikkar aptly described them) which founded the Indian National Congress and gave it leadership in its early years was a *noblesse de la robe*, learned, eloquent and ambitious—lawyers, journalists and some enlightened businessmen. 'The social ideas of this class', pointed out Panikkar,

'were, broadly speaking, moulded by their legal education. The Rule of Law was to them the basis of all society. They visualised India as a replica of England, an industrialised and commercial society with a limited, democratic government. Their nationalism at that stage did not go beyond a gradual participation in the administration of the country, in the civil services and in the judiciary and the establishment of a parliamentary system, so that Indian opinion might be associated with the government... Liberalism was their creed: self-government and economic freedom their political objectives; the regeneration of India, organised as a progressive, forward-looking community accepting freely from its sciences and its new learning was the great ideal they placed before themselves.' (*The Foundations of New India*, pp. 81 & 82).

Naturally proud of their learning, they also believed that 'The educated community represented the brain and conscience of the country and were the legitimate spokesmen of the illiterate masses, the natural custodian of their interest... It is true in all ages that those who think must govern those who toil...' (Sir Ramesh Chandra Mitra in the welcome address to the Congress in 1896).

These natural custodians of the interests of the illiterate masses had a dream about the future; but it was *their* dream for the masses. In Panikkar's words, again; 'They were fervently patriotic, anxious to see India advance politically and socially and they worked steadily for that purpose. They were moved by great ideals and held firmly to the doctrines of liberalism. But they were aliens in India, strangers to their own people, and their ideas and beliefs were not shared by any but a small class of educated people.' They were so convinced about their causes and their

methods and their dreams for the millions in the country that when Gandhiji attempted to convert the inane national movement into a mass movement they recoiled in horror and dismay. And it is well known that the difference of opinion between the liberal leaders of the Congress and Gandhiji was because of the latter's insistence that the character of the movement must be changed to make it a mass movement and the unwillingness of the former to give up the niceties of parliamentary debates and the conventions of liberal legalism.

There may be few today who would argue that Gandhiji was wrong in converting the freedom movement into a mass movement. It may be widely conceded also that the sturdy patriotism of the liberal leaders with all the eloquence and enthusiasm would not have brought about independence, and that a mass movement was necessary to achieve independence. But, then it may be pointed out too that the national movement had to be exceptional: we were fighting against a foreign power; we had no power except the power of numbers.

In any case, it will be claimed that if the achievement of political freedom was an event, the achievement of economic progress is a process, a slow and prolonged process and so the methods and procedures of the two cannot be similar. Now that independence has been won and adult franchise has been established, should not the masses become the silent majority except, if necessary, at the time of the elections? And should not the governance of the country be left to the elected representatives of the people and planning for development to the experts appointed by such representatives? Can planning be reduced to the level of street demonstrations and mass meetings? Even granting that the people are supreme, can they be trusted to define their economic

objectives and to work out appropriate strategies? Should not theories and models take the place of oratory and processions? In short, after a brief interlude of popular participation in the affairs of the nation, are we not back in the normal situation where 'those who think must govern those who toil'.

These are unuttered—publicly at any rate—questions which, however, have formed the basis of our development policy of the past quarter of a century. As the early leaders of the national movement hugged the liberal legalism of the West, so do the policy makers of our times cling on to the development economics of the West which, after all, is the twentieth century offshoot of nineteenth century liberalism. Development comes through capital formation; capital formation is difficult in a poor country; hence the initial push for development must come from outside through foreign aid; for domestic capital formation to be effective the consumption of the masses must be squeezed; the present generation must tighten its belt for the sake of the future. These have been the ground rules of our development policy. We have also been influenced by the doctrines of the 'East', whereby we accepted industrialisation (even at the expense of agricultural improvement) as the path to growth and concluded that growth in the long run comes through capital intensive industries.

In this process of submitting ourselves to the instant developmentalism imported from outside, we have fallen into the subtle but dangerous habit of relying on remedies without diagnosing our disease, or rather of relying on ready made diagnosis too. Under the influence of the doctrines and patterns of both the West and the East, the development problem in our country has always been presented as an academic economic

problem. From the point of view of the West, development has been almost exclusively a matter of capital-formation and while 'progressive' western economists, influenced by considerations such as the big push theory, have been arguing for a positive State policy to achieve this end, there is, even in their thinking a basic commitment to social *laissez-faire*.

Not that they are altogether against social and institutional changes. They would, for instance, point out that institutional obstacles to the optimal allocation of resources—in the Indian case caste has been the favourite target of attack—would have to be removed, but by and large they would insist too that the institutional changes necessary for development result from economic growth itself. On the strength of this belief, the development process could be confined to its economic aspects with the emphasis on savings. There is a sense in which the eastern view of development reinforces the western bias towards academic economics as the mainstay of development.

Planning models such as the ones we have borrowed from Russia are taken from a situation where the social and institutional questions have already been settled. Soviet writers on planning are quite explicit on this point. 'The law of planned, balanced development emerges and begins to operate when public ownership of the means of production and socialist production relations have been established', says G. Sorokin in his *Planning in the U.S.S.R.* The abolition of private property and the establishment of public ownership of the means of production converts the multitude of individual enterprises into a single economic body. And planning is the mechanism of stimulating and coordinating this huge complex economic body. Consequently planning for development consists of

determining the optimal allocation of investment inter-sectorally and inter-temporally.

Thus, in the development theories of the western world and in the planning procedures of the Soviet camp, the emphasis logically lies on the economic aspect, on capital formation and capital allocation, to be more precise. It is this basic similarity of approach in the two apparently different if not divergent systems of thought that has helped countries like ours to borrow happily from both.

This is clearly seen in the case of our second five-year plan. The inspiration for the basic model of Mahalanobis on which the plan was based came from the Soviet theoretical writings and planning experiences. It was a model of investment allocation, of *centralised* investment allocation. But his physical aspect of the plan could be neatly grafted on to a western finance mobilisation model, and the two together seemed to result in a beautiful Indian synthesis. And, rightly, it received universal acclaim as an Indian contribution to the theory of development planning. That it did not succeed, and did not even work in India, is a different matter.

But, now that we seem to have generated our own type of planning, there is a great reluctance to go beyond its confines in any of our development efforts except in the manner of minor modifications here and there. We are once again in a situation similar to the early days of the freedom movement intellectually committed to a procedure which is neat and even sophisticated, but pathetically inane and inoperative.

Not that we have not realised the limitations of this procedure and recognised the need to go beyond a limited technical programme. In the first five-year plan it was stated: 'In planning for a better economic order, the close interrelation

between the technical and social aspects of the process of development has to be continually kept in view. While there is need for concentrating effort on the more immediate problems, planning implies the readiness on the part of the community to view the social process as one whole and to take action designed to shape this process along desired lines over a defined period.'

The second plan was even more explicit in this regard. 'The task before an underdeveloped country', it said, 'is not merely to get better results within the existing framework of economic and social institutions, but to mould and refashion them so that they contribute effectively to the realisation of wider and deeper social values'.

These are pious and noble sentiments. But little, if anything, of these have been translated into action. Perhaps they were not meant to be. Similar have been the sentiments about the need for popular participation in the planning process about which also there are eloquent passages in our plan documents. Here, too, there has been a wide gap between professed objectives and actual practices. Even the most ardent apologists of the present order will not claim that our five-year plans have generated any kind of popular enthusiasm at all.

How do we get out of this sterile state and arrive at a development process that involves the masses fully in its inception and execution? Though not in such terms, the question has been forced upon our decision makers of late. The emphasis on growth with social justice is at once an indication of a rethinking of our strategy of development and a symbol of that confusion in that rethinking. To the extent that it represents a disenchantment with the view tenaciously held so far that growth, if only it is rapid, will cure our ills, it is a wel-

come sign. But, in the belief that the new element of social justice can be reached by a few minor modifications of priorities and techniques, it symbolises the commitment to a concept of development which is still primarily growth, or at the most 'growth plus'.

If a breakthrough is desired, a new orientation to development is the first requirement. Development has to be seen as a major transformation of society which not only ensures that everybody has the basic necessities of life, but that the decision-making processes in society are genuinely participatory. A redistribution of resources is necessary to achieve such a transformation, but a redistribution of power is required to sustain it. Development then is a multi-dimensional revolution, economic, social and cultural, to release and mobilise the energies and potentialities of the people. It is mass movement.

There is little reason to believe that such a transformation has, or has to have a universal pattern. In some instances, a sudden and violent overthrow of an existing order has presaged the transformation; in other places it has been built from the ashes of war. In yet other instances it has initially been associated with prolonged civil war. Only two things need to be said about the process. First, its essence must be to let the captives free, to release the creative energies of the masses of the people, to let them assert themselves. Second, it is bound to face opposition from those whose power and authority it necessarily threatens. While these two features are common, the transformation itself is a *historical* phenomenon, not a mere 'ideal type', and hence will be conditioned and circumscribed by the particular circumstances attending it.

A strategy to quicken the development transformation in the Indian context, therefore,

calls for an evaluation and interpretation of the 'circumstances' in the country. This is an area for detailed study and only its barest outlines can be attempted here. One of the most obvious of these circumstances is the colonial past of the country, which awakened in the elites the desire for freedom and liberation, but which kept the masses in a state of hybernation. It also generated a sense of nationalism which found full expression in the freedom movement.

The colonial era initiated some aspects of economic growth. It resulted in the growth of a capitalist industrial sector alongside of a decaying feudal agriculture. It brought about a power structure whose elements were the landlords, the newly formed industrial class, the bureaucracy and the intelligentsia. With the inability to destroy the feudal system in agriculture and to build up a sufficiently strong capitalist order in industry, it also resulted in a certain commercialisation of the economy and a total economic structure dominated by self-employed, numerically vast, but functionally weak.

A second circumstantial factor attending the Indian transformation is the 'liberal era' of the first quarter century of independence, characterised by concessions to the masses. The most important among them has been adult franchise. A second, possibly reluctant, concession has been the use of the languages of the people in public life and in administration. A third has been special concessions for the backward sections of the population.

The development planning of the past two decades deserves special treatment as a further circumstance influencing the Indian transformation. On the positive side, it has stimulated a stagnant economy and given it a new dynamism and resilience. It has built up the capacity for further growth and has

conclusively shown that change, even change on a grand scale, is possible in a land which was known for its fatalism and pessimism. But its strategy of growth without social change has strengthened the power elements of the past and reinforced some of the retrograde aspects of the colonial era. Among them the most glaring is the growing gap between the rich and the poor and the miserable lot of the rural poor. The policies of the past have stimulated the vast self-employed group, especially in trade and industry, but have also strengthened the economic minority's grip over the economy to the extent of enabling them to run a parallel show in the economic sphere with two books, two markets, two prices and two standards.

The cumulative impact of all these has been a certain ferment. There has been, or there is coming to be an awakening of the masses who have converted the slogan of 'justice, economic, social, and political' from an eloquent but innocuous liberal aphorism into a literal fighting creed. There is now a sense of shock about injustice. The masses are also asserting themselves over the bosses; the bosses have been beaten in their own game, politics. There are those who interpret the results of the mid-term elections as the masses' plea for stability or a renewed commitment to parliamentary democracy. Neither seems to be correct. It was simply an instance of the masses trying out their strength in an area where they have been treated as mere dummies. Their victory there need not, and almost certainly will not make them subservient to parliamentary democracy; they have proved that they have the strength to capture it. The future is for them to decide.

The crucial development question today is whether this mass awakening can be made to spill over into the economic arena as

well. Once again we are in search of a model of economic transition. The thinking on this subject has come largely from the experience of eastern European countries represented in the writings of Kalecki, Lange and others. According to the prescription that Lange gave us in the late fifties, a mixed economy in the process of transition to socialism is brought under over-all socialist direction by the existence in the economy of a large socialised sector which controls the 'commanding posts' of economic life. ('The Role of Planning in a Socialist Economy', *Indian Economic Review*, August 1958). Lange also pointed out that 'a high centralisation of planning and management' is necessary, especially in underdeveloped economies and in the initial stages of socialisation.

**P**lanning under these circumstances would be more than a mere coordination of the activities of the various branches of the economy. It must include at least two things: 'First, the division of national income between accumulation and consumption and, second, the direction of investments among the different branches of the economy. The first determines the general rate of growth, the second determines the direction of development. Unless these two things are in the plan there is no active guidance of the development of the national economy.' Lange's prescriptions have considerably influenced our own approach to socialism and planning in the past, and the thinking today appears to be that what is required now is a more faithful and determined adherence to the principles of transition.

But, we must raise some questions about their relevance and adequacy in our context today. Lange himself would not have been so categorical about the relationship between socialism and a 'high centralisation of planning and management' if he

had lived to witness some of the recent developments in his own Poland and neighbouring socialist countries. The theory of the control of the commanding posts also has to be reviewed in the Indian context. What indeed are the commanding posts of the Indian economy? There has been very little discussion of this question in the country although the expression itself is frequently and almost indiscriminately used.

**S**econdly, what is the rationale of the control over the commanding posts? In Lange's own thinking it was almost a necessary corollary of the principle of centralised planning and of the need for the State to decide on the division of national income between accumulation and consumption and on the allocation of investment among the different sectors of the economy. We have to ask whether with the existing pattern of the economy and its characteristics (with a vast portion of the total savings of the economy being generated in the household sector where the savings and investment decision may not be independent, for instance) it will be possible at all for such macro decisions to be made effective.

Those who are excessively enthusiastic about centralised control over the economy will suggest that conditions necessary for such controls must be immediately brought about. This is just another form of misguided enthusiasm, the eagerness to provide condition for the sake of other conditions whose validity and relevance have hardly been examined.

To say this is not to argue against centralisation, socialisation, nationalisation or anything else *per se*, but to emphasise the need to view their effectiveness as means of a total transformation in the Indian context. If it is granted that our primary need today is to support the awakening of the masses, we

must design a strategy which will achieve that objective instead of merely reciting the slogans and creeds we have learned. We have to think through the Indian problem anew.

**A**ny strategy of development in India which is meant to make it a genuinely people's movement must have our rural areas as the centre of attention and action. The millions in our rural parts, landless, jobless and almost hopeless are one of the causes of our poverty and one of its clearest manifestations. To provide them the basic necessities of life, food, shelter and work, and a sense of belonging and participation should be the first objective of the new development strategy. But, it may appear that this is asking for the moon (an expression which has lost much of its meaning). Can we afford it?

However, the question to ask is not whether we can afford it, but how to achieve it. In the past many attempts to tackle this issue have been made and given up — cottage industries, community development, and rural works programme. It may be that these experiments failed, not because they were too ambitious, but because they were ill-conceived and half-hearted. A new and bolder approach is necessary.

A factor which makes it possible to launch out on a bolder programme now is the rapid and sustained increase in the output of food in the last three years. The excessive optimism that the Food Ministers expressed in this matter has been toned down by the more cautious evaluation of the Agricultural Prices Commission, and yet the possibilities of a breakthrough in food production in the immediate future appear to be a reasonable prospect. Once the basic problem of food supply is solved, providing work for the rural unemployed is an organisational matter, and it is

here that the past experiments met with failure.

**I**n evolving a strategy to provide work for the rural masses, several factors have to be taken into account, none of which can be too readily generalised for the country as a whole. These are the seasonal fluctuations in work opportunities with the usual labour abundance turning out to be acute labour shortage during the busy agricultural seasons, the legitimate desire of small owners and tenants to attend to work on their own farms when such is necessary, the difficulties of creating job opportunities in village areas on the one hand and the unwillingness of the workers to migrate into urban areas even if work may be available and the like. To the extent these are real issues, no programme which ignores them or fails to make the necessary adjustments can successfully tackle the rural unemployment problem. Can there be an organisational structure which will at once be large enough and flexible enough to deal with such a variety of considerations? This is the crucial question.

A district level land army along para military lines appears to be one feasible solution. In the first instance, there should be a comprehensive survey with the assistance of civic bodies and voluntary agencies in the district. A register of all who cannot find work and are eager to have work either for the whole year or during specified periods of the year must be compiled. They should then be recruited to the Land Army on the understanding that provision would be made for them to attend to the work on their own farms when this is necessary. The workers should live in barracks in four or five centres within the district with provision to visit their families once a week. A five or six day week with the off days staggered should be made the norm. The workers should be given

meals and a weekly salary in cash. They should be organised into companies and platoons to attend to a variety of programmes all over the district.

These work programmes could include rural housing, villages school constructions, minor irrigation projects and road construction, slum clearance and the like. An organised adult literacy programme could be built into it by devoting part of the time during slack periods for education programmes. During the busy agricultural seasons the workers could be allowed to go back to the farms.

A set-up of this kind has several advantages. Without the element of compulsion, it mobilises the manpower in the rural areas and uses it to activate the community as a whole. By providing part of the wages in the form of food, the food surplus is utilised. By moving the men into different parts of the district and through other organised efforts it widens the horizons of the workers, and yet by not taking them too far away from their homes and by making it possible for them to visit their families regularly, it does not upset them too much. And because the programme is flexible and related to the ongoing activity in the villages, it does not constitute a sudden disruption of the village economy. It has also additional advantages such as the job opportunities it will provide directly to a supervisory cadre (of graduates, engineers etc.) and indirectly to a growing number of service entrepreneurs in the rural areas and in the suburbs.

**T**his is, however, only the immediate beginning. If it is successful, the programme will initiate a series of changes, especially in the villages and in agriculture. With alternative job opportunities becoming available, there may be a reduction of the availability of labour in agriculture; some marginal farmers may leave farming

also. These two developments will change the characteristics of the rural economy and the rural structure itself. A controlled transformation of property relations will therefore become necessary almost along with the mobilisation of manpower: a land policy will have to accompany the Land Army programme.

**I**f the Indian economy has a commanding post, it is land. Not only is land the most important productive force in the economy next to labour, it is also one of the main forms of asset. Thus, both from the points of view of economic growth and economic justice, land is a key factor and hence a land policy will have to be the chief instrument of a development policy. The momentum generated by the Land Army will make its impact felt at two levels. At the lower level it may lead to the consolidation of small ownership which is a good thing; but at the higher level it may also generate tendencies for larger consolidations by encouraging the rapid mechanisation of agriculture, thanks to the increasing labour scarcity. If not strongly regulated, it can degenerate into a land grab movement by the rich farmers—both legally through purchases and illegally through the many devious methods that exist. The land policy, in this context, must be geared to the establishment of peasant ownership of land.

Peasant ownership of land can be either the ultimate aim of land policy or a prelude to some form of socialisation of land. A dogmatic attitude about the ultimate pattern of land ownership is not necessary and is in fact dangerous. This is a matter which must be decided in the final analysis by the farmers themselves mainly, although not exclusively. Hence it is necessary to move towards peasant ownership so that the peasants themselves can decide subsequently whether to proceed towards socialisation or

not. This is the lesson that the experience of many socialist countries teach. And it is likely also that in a large country like ours there can be and will be many forms of socially acceptable patterns of land ownership.

**H**ence, in the matter of land policy the important questions are not about the ultimate pattern, but about the immediate steps to be adopted. What appears urgent is to *nationalise transactions* in landed property. This could be achieved by setting up an autonomous Land Trading Corporation organised on a regional basis which would have the sole rights to all land purchases and sales. The main purpose in nationalising land transactions will be to ensure that land ceiling legislations are not circumvented through bogus transactions, but it will serve two other purposes as well. Firstly, it will eliminate the speculative investment in land meant for capital appreciation alone which has been the cause of the excessive rise in land values, especially in urban areas. Secondly, it will shut down one main area where black money now reigns supreme. And nothing will generate more popular enthusiasm for development policies than the curb on rising land values and the elimination, even partial elimination, of the play of black money.

It is difficult to predict precisely the manner in which such popular enthusiasm will find expression. But, if a mass movement succeeds in bringing about a redistribution of landed property, it is almost sure to work for the redistribution of other forms of property as well. People's Councils may be set up to examine all claims to property and to decide to what extent individual property rights must be allowed. Here again there does not seem to be any one sacred pattern: the people must decide what is the socially acceptable pattern of property ownerships and relationships.

However, to the extent that reductions in property inequalities are necessary in India, it may become necessary to have, as the people's movement gathers momentum, capital levies with some exemption level and steeply progressive rates beyond that level.

All these suggestions are in some sense an exercise in crystal-gazing. It has to be so inevitably. For, the distinguishing feature of a genuine people's movement is its unpredictability, not because it is irrational, but because it is creatively dynamic defying all curbs on human freedom including the patterns of the past. So there is little that one can do, except to grope along with others who are also groping.

However, some conditions necessary for the people's movement and some of its immediate corollaries must be anticipated. For a development process of this kind to be initiated and for it to generate its own momentum, a great degree of decentralisation of the decision-making process is necessary. Planning for development in our country has been excessively centralised. Some attempts at decentralisation are being made now. But, so far such attempts have consisted of changing the geographical location of the decision-making agencies, with the decision-making process itself remaining largely unaffected. Planning Commissions and Boards have been set up in some of the States. While these are necessary and welcome steps indeed, they are hardly sufficient.

**I**f the development process is to become a mass movement, the power of decision-making on many important matters must belong directly to the people exercised through their immediate representative bodies. Decision-making power will become effective only if it is accompanied by the power to implement as well. Hence dras-

tic changes in the administrative set-up are absolutely necessary. For the type of programmes envisaged in this paper, for instance, the District has to become a resource mobilising, work-proposing and project executing agency apart from being the traditional civil administrative unit. This is not to abandon decision-making at other levels. One of the conditions necessary for a people's movement is a structure of multi-level decision-making units and a machinery to coordinate such decisions. In a sense, such a system must evolve out of the movement itself.

**S**econdly, development as a mass movement does not make planning of the technical type superfluous. The problems of the allocation of the material resources will still have to be examined; inter-temporal choices will still have to be made. What the mass movement supplies is the appropriate frame within these questions are to be conceived and examined.

Finally, it must be emphasised that development as a people's movement will be challenged at various points by vested interests of varying intensities. There are the obvious anti-people's forces whose power and techniques are well known. But there are also the more subtle challenges coming from those who conceive of development as a movement for the people without allowing it to become a movement by the people. Among the latter must be included the elite intelligentsia whose concept of development will be questioned by a people's movement; the traditional administrators who will see in a people's movement nothing but mob frenzy and anarchy and the radical politicians who, because of their commitment to ready-made revolutions, will find it difficult to recognise the right of the people to decide for themselves the nature of the revolution they want.



# West bengal

NITISH R. DE

MY country! in thy days of  
glory past

A beauteous halo circled  
round thy brow,

And worshipped as a deity  
thou wast

Where is that glory, where  
that reverence now?

—*Henry Louis Vivian Derozio*  
(1809-1831)

Derozio, a meteorite of the  
Bengal renaissance, grieved for

India at the threshold of the  
nineteenth century. Had he  
been living today in his native  
Calcutta, Derozio might have  
shrieked hysterically and with  
justification.

What West Bengal is today  
and the abyss it is in, is not so  
much a matter of assessment in  
comparison with what Maha-  
rashtra is or what Gujarat has  
become. It is more a matter of  
the process over a period of two  
decades and more and the

TABLE I  
Estimated Average Daily Employment in All Factories

State	1961		1966		1967		1968		1969	
	W.F.	E. (a)	W.F.	E. (a)	W.F.	E. (a)	W.F.	E. (a)	W.F.	E. (a)
Gujarat	3841	361	4668	413	4863	416	5096	405	5199	415
Maharashtra	8308	827	9129	937	9270	942	9201	938	9655	978
W. Bengal	4333	739	5735	873	5679	865	5757	850	5619	823

W. F. : Working Factories E. : Employment (a) : for employment figures, add 000

character of that process. The focus of enquiry will be the abstraction of one major contributing variable in the dynamics of a complex social phenomenon leading to a *decaying* process. As such, there is no need to become, in our search, either a Bengali-phobe or a Gujarati-ophile. We shall present some information only to bring home our main thrust.

Despite the scourge of the world war in the eastern sector (the infamous famine is one instance), West Bengal no doubt emerged at the dawn of independence as a privileged State, even though Bombay presidency (which included Gujarat) enjoyed a minor advantage in the matter of aggregate factory employment: for example, in 1948, 623,207 over 601,772. However, in terms of the industrial spectrum and the stability of employment, West Bengal still held sway.

But, West Bengal as a part of independent India, could not only not retain its pace of activity, it, in fact, embarked on a downward swing. Let us begin with factory employment.

It may be noted that during 1966-69, the average daily factory employment went up at the rate of 10 per cent per annum for the whole of India, while West Bengal recorded a continuous decline. During the 1951-61 period, the proportion of the working population to the total population increased from 38.9 per cent to 42.8 per cent for the whole of India,

while in West Bengal the corresponding proportion declined from 35.0 per cent to 33.0 per cent. During the fifteen years of planned development (1951-66) employment in registered factories moved at tortoise speed from 7.4 per cent to 9.0 per cent in eleven of the sixteen districts of West Bengal. The picture is no better in respect of household industry. In three districts this sector of industry provides employment to from 9 per cent to 13 per cent of the working population, and 2 other districts employ a little over 5 per cent. In

the rest of the districts, it is even less.

Lest the unwary reader conclude that the advent of the United Front regime in 1967 has brought about this messy situation, it is necessary to point out that 'a declining rate of growth in the employment in the registered factory sector had been noticed right from 1963 onwards.' During 1951-59, increment in average daily employment in the registered factory sector was only 20,000. In between 1965 and 1966, the figure came down by 40,000! A recent survey indicates that there are over 3 million unemployed in West Bengal. At one point of time, recently, 1500 unemployed engineers filed in for a stipend of Rs. 250 per month tenable for a period of four months!

We may now move on to the activity level. There are three sets of data given below.

The evidence of falling standards is clear from Tables II,

TABLE II  
Compound Growth Rates in Agriculture 1952-53 to 1964-65

State	Production % per annum	Area % per annum	Productivity % per annum
Gujarat	4.55	0.45	4.09
Maharashtra	2.93	0.44	2.45
West Bengal	1.94	0.59	1.34
All India	3.01	1.21	1.77

TABLE III  
Gross Ex-factory Value of Industrial Output

State	1951	1965	Percentage increase in 1965 over 1951
	Rupees in crores		
Gujarat	456.12	518.00	345
Maharashtra		1516.00	
		2034.00	
Haryana	19.99	249.00	1145
Punjab			
Tamil Nadu	154.62	545.00	351
Andhra		253.00	
		798.00	
West Bengal	355.79	1376.00	286
All India	1306.86	6419.60	379

TABLE IV  
Number of Pumps Energised for Irrigation

State	At the end of 1968-1969	At the end of Fourth Plan
Gujarat .. .. .	42,088	57,088
Maharashtra .. .. .	124,961	224,961
Tamil Nadu .. .. .	410,119	562,284
Bihar .. .. .	49,375	138,375
West Bengal .. .. .	1,197	3,607
All India .. .. .	1,087,547	2,337,547

III and IV, particularly compared to what has been possible elsewhere. We may further establish the point with reference to the small scale sector of industry. A study reveals that on an average small industry in West Bengal has not been receiving more than 3 to 5 per cent of its requirements of steel sheets and other flat products during 1967-1969. The apathetic attitude of the State's Directorate of Cottage and Small Scale Industries was evaluated as one major cause.

In addition, it has also been made out that the various government agencies and the public sector located within the State have often patronised sources other than the small industry sector located in the State. A Reserve Bank study indicates that at Howrah, 'of the 3,100 major machines employed by 200 sample units, about 2,000 were found to be over 15 years old and more than 1,000 over 30 years old. If one takes 15 years to be the normal life of a machine, it is clear that there is a lot of junk accumulated in this sector.'

The picture of the working capital is even worse. At Howrah area, for example, 40 per cent of the small units operate with no accumulated stock of raw materials or the stock is worth Rs. 100 at the most. Nearly 60 per cent of units have no stocks of semi-finished goods. Only 18 per cent of the units have a bank balance exceeding Rs. 1,000. About 67 per cent run without any bank balance.

Nearly 30 per cent of the units operate without electricity.

The problem of production is serious but not for labour unrest, as is the popular belief. More than 70 per cent of the units are on job-order on a hand-to-mouth existence. Only 6.6 per cent of the units have a semblance of production planning. The Reserve Bank study shows that 80 per cent of the wastage of workers' time is on this account. Behavioural irregularities are minor contributing factors. It is perhaps well known that Howrah is the satellite city of Calcutta and is located within a radius of a few miles from the State Government headquarters.

Before we go on to examine the oft-repeated 'discrimination against the State' case, we may mention the case of obvious discrimination perpetrated within West Bengal by its administration. This refers to intra-State disparities. In 1960-1961 the

four poorest districts accounted for an aggregate of 12.11 per cent of the State's population to 6.79 per cent of the State's income and 10.41 per cent and 3.56 per cent of the incomes from agriculture and industry respectively. Three districts at the top level, on the other hand, collectively accounted for 35.20 per cent of the population, but 45.13 per cent of the total income and 56.68 per cent of the income from industry. In 1966, 81 per cent of the registered factories were located in the three districts of Calcutta, 24 Parganas and Howrah. Nine backward districts had only 7 per cent.

The picture is no better in respect of the small scale sector. Three districts around Calcutta, viz., the 24 Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly account for 3,257 units out of a total of 4,248 excluding North Bengal. Howrah alone has 1,728 units while 100 miles from Calcutta, Birbhum district has 143 units with 193 employees only.

We may now move on to an area which has been traditionally the stronghold of Bengal—the field of education. In literacy, the State's position was second, next only to Kerala, in 1951; ten years hence, it had slid to the fifth position. In the primary, middle and high school enrolments in 1960-1961, West Bengal's positions were fifth, seventh and fifth respectively. In primary school enrol-

TABLE V  
Admission Problem in the Calcutta University

Subjects	1958-1959			1967-1968		
	Honours Examinees	No. Passed	Post Graduate Seats	Honours Examinees	No. Passed	Post Graduate Seats
Botany ..	43	10	22	115	69	30
Chemistry ..	171	75	35	612	336	69
Physics ..	231	176	40	480	329	43
Economics ..	363	215	109	487	168	139
Bengali ..	190	155	212	870	252	287
English ..	133	80	111	493	196	197

ment Assam and Gujarat have higher placements. In respect of middle school enrolments, Assam, Bihar and Gujarat rank above West Bengal. In the whole of the State, the government directly administers not more than two dozen schools. One survey indicates that 'nearly one-third of the junior high, high and higher secondary schools are unaided, receiving no monetary aid from the government.' Although in the field of higher/technical/vocational education, West Bengal ranks first in terms of facilities for post-graduate education, the situation is none-too-happy, particularly in the non-liberal arts disciplines.

We may now look into the 'missed opportunities' caused by sluggishness/complacency which often aggravated an already sore situation. In the first place, it seems that the initial signals towards the onset of recession were ignored by the State. Compared to 1965, railway wagon production suffered a setback of 39 per cent in 1966. The situation was allowed to deteriorate in 1967 causing a further cutback of production by 32 per cent. In other relevant States, the impact was less: 21.4 per cent in 1966 and 22 per cent in 1967. In 1965-66, the all-India production of diesel engines, reamers and conduit pipes increased by 21.5 per cent, 18.8 per cent and 8.5 per cent respectively, while in West Bengal production dropped by 13.6 per cent, 33.2 per cent and 11.2 per cent respectively.

Secondly, a study published in 1965 indicates that it was within the range of possibility to utilise the idle capacity in engineering, chemical, jute, textile, paper and printing, leather and rubber and other industries to a considerable extent: 181 per cent increase in output, 163 per cent increase in inter-industry deliveries and 190 per cent increase in final bill of goods. A government report mentions that 'the era ending in 1965

was... an era mainly centered on capacity creation. For the final consumption of this era it need now be supplemented by an era mainly centering on effective demand creation.' This the system has failed to do.

Thirdly, a tale of lost opportunity lies buried in an attempt to abolish the permanent settlement of the land-holding system. This system of vested interest in land has sustained itself over ages upon the exploitative base of share cropping and other evil practices. An opportunity came in 1954 to soften the evils of intermediary interests in land-holding. By early 1965, 4.35 lakh acres vested in the government, but at least half a dozen serious empirical studies indicate a large scale violation of the provisions of law. Since 1967, the U.F. government could recover another 4.0 lakh acres of agricultural land and the official report says that 'there is much more to be done regarding recovery of hidden land.'

A fourth major castaway opportunity refers to the climate of industrial relations. With the advent of the jute textile industry in the middle of the last century, the West Bengal administration has had an experience of over one hundred years in dealing with industrial labour, an experience denied to most of the Indian States. Table VI shows the pictures for the past decade.

In 1970, the Durgapur Steel Plant, the largest public sector unit in the State, alone contri-

buted to 1.6 million man-days lost, and at one point in 1970 the plant was incurring an operating loss of Rs. 1 crore per month. The point to remember is that since the inception of the plant, the personnel department has always been headed by an officer of the State cadre of the I.A.S. There was never any question of any professional person being given the job until late 1971 when a professional man was elevated to the position. The State government has, however, lodged a protest demanding the post. Precedent is certainly in its favour, but not the performance in industrial relations.

Here is another case. In the Agro-Industries Corporation, the records of the pumpset loanes were being maintained by a peon who in May 1971 asked for an allowance for continuously carrying out this responsibility. His case was recommended by the company secretary but the L.A.S. Managing Director would not have it. He wanted a record-keeper to be recruited. The conflict got accentuated. For two months the record room remained under lock and key. At long last, the Managing Director yielded but only after two months' stalemate in business, prolonged agitation and industrial de-relations.

Fifthly, the State has failed to create any surplus out of its own investments. Table VII gives the picture as in 1968-69.

It is rather remarkable that while it has not been difficult to launch a new enterprise in the

TABLE VI  
Man-days lost due to Industrial Unrest

Year	STATE							
	Kerala		Maharashtra		West Bengal		All-India	
	D	MDL	D	MDL	D	MDL	D	MDL
1961	146	395,315	279	580,110	275	2,143,538	1,357	4,918,755
1968	305	2,491,745	647	1,696,869	454	7,343,706	2,776	17,243,679
1969	246	1,627,919	646	1,272,455	419	9,880,856	2,627	19,048,288
1970	227	511,116	533	1,433,484	408	11,504,400	2,328	17,174,697

D: Disputes MDL: Man-days lost

TABLE VII  
Dividends from State Investments

Gujarat	M.P.	Rajasthan	U.P.	Maha- rashtra	Punjab	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	All India
3.37	3.08	1.94	1.83	1.79	1.03	0.75	0.04	1.35
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

State under the aegis of the government, its sustenance as a productive system has always been a serious problem. While several States have been able to maintain, if not improve, their State transport systems and the urban milk supply schemes, these have been foundering in Calcutta. In reality, the State enterprises have become a veritable mill-stone round the neck of the State of 'socialist aspiration.'

Sixthly, the State has failed in assessing the vulnerability of its existing industries and geared itself up to appropriate rectification. The glory of West Bengal has been built upon its raw materials base: jute, tea, coal and engineering. The natural advantage of East Bengal and the steel price equalisation policy have considerably undermined the pre-eminent position of West Bengal. Even though these facts became known long before the industrial crisis assumed a serious dimension, the State machinery allowed the situation to drift instead of taking steps to broaden the industrial base. New technology-based industries were allowed to go to other places.

Lastly, the successive popular governments travelling at the crest of mass support did fail miserably in evoking a sense of vigorous optimism among the masses of the population. Not only was there no bold plan for the future; there was no vigour in carrying out even the minimum commitments for which an autonomous unit of a federal system is liable. One would not find it easy to single out one major achievement of the State government for which the peo-

ple of West Bengal could remain grateful to its government.

Stepping down from the data-presentation activity to a diagnostic study, one will encounter the Centre's 'discriminating behaviour' argument. We find that it is a mixed bag.

The first major case of culpable act refers to the refugee rehabilitation problem. In between 1946 and mid-1970, 42 lakhs 'recorded' refugees came over, of which 22.8 lakhs have been settled in West Bengal and another 4.53 lakhs elsewhere, leaving an uncovered mass of 14.65 lakhs. Till 1960, the expenditure on establishment for the refugee rehabilitation ministry for East Bengal immigrants was Rs. 67 lakhs compared to Rs. 2.20 crores for the immigrants from West Pakistan. To cap it all, uprooted masses of people from the East were deprived of any compensation unlike what happened to

their counterparts from the West. Three million standard acres of land, about 7 lakhs rural houses and 2.87 lakhs urban houses, shops and other properties treated as evacuee property were given over as compensation to 1 million refugees from the West in addition to an expenditure of Rs. 65 crores on houses and shops.

Another fact that is much made of is the discriminatory allocation of scarce industrial raw materials to West Bengal. There is substance in this allegation as will appear from Table VIII.

A third item of discrimination refers to the financial assistance from the government sponsored institutions. It seems that neither on the basis of ex-factory value of output nor on the basis of industrial growth did West Bengal get a very fair deal.

On the other hand, the Centre's substantive direct support to West Bengal in respect of planned expenditure looks distinctly fair contrary to the popular belief in West Bengal. Table X is an indicator.

In the Fourth Plan, be it noted, West Bengal plans for the lowest per capita outlay among

TABLE VIII  
State-wise Allocation of Raw Materials

Item	State	Assessed require- ment in 1962-1963 (ton)	Actual allotment in 1963-1964 (ton)	Percentage
Copper	Maharashtra	10,000	2,863	28.63
	Punjab	21,030	2,967	14.11
	Gujarat	3,000	2,189	72.97
	West Bengal	19,900	1,835	9.22
Zinc	Maharashtra	8,000	1,883	23.54
	Punjab	14,080	1,915	13.60
	Gujarat	3,600	1,362	37.83
	West Bengal	21,000	1,513	7.20
Lead	Maharashtra	1,800	46.50	2.50
	Punjab	330	28.00	8.50
	Gujarat	50	11.50	23.50
	West Bengal	2,000	40.50	2.25
Nickel	Maharashtra	640	42.625	6.50
	Punjab	420	23.115	10.00
	Gujarat	4.7	7.450	140.00
	West Bengal	11.0	0.600	0.54

TABLE IX  
Assistance by Financial Institutions at the End of 1966-1967

State	Amount Rs. lakhs	Percentage	Ex-factory value of output % of total (1965)	Percentage of industrial licences (1965-1966)
Maharashtra	282.33	26.5	24	27.37
Gujarat	94.14	8.8	8	8.89
Tamil Nadu	156.21	14.7	9	9.68
West Bengal	139.73	13.1	21	16.46

TABLE X  
Per Capita Expenditure under the Plans

State	Total for 18 years (1951-1969)		Fourth Plan (1969-1974)	
	Plan Outlay Rs.	Central Assistance Rs.	Plan Outlay Rs.	Central Assistance Rs.
Assam	269	201	161	157
Bihar	181	109	82	63
Orissa	309	214	81	71
Gujarat	346	132	188	66
Kerala	264	161	133	90
Maharashtra	300	102	178	54
Tamil Nadu	254	131	136	55
West Bengal	243	141	79	54

all Indian States, which once again proves the chicken-heartedness of the State machinery in raising resources.

Another indicator is the central investment on industrial projects in West Bengal. During the period 1951-68, there has been a total investment of Rs. 408.2 crores as against only Rs. 48.9 crores in Gujarat and Rs. 49.9 crores in Maharashtra. In addition, the current spate of activities in Calcutta metropolitan district is a pointer to the Centre's concern for the city. (One wishes that the same sense of urgency was shown for the rest of eastern India).

Up to this point, our analyses lead to the conclusion that the decline of West Bengal had begun much before the United Front came into power. The downward trend did continue, with aggravation from economic recession, unabated during the

U.F. regime. An inference is also warranted that while the National Congress under Dr. B. C. Roy enjoyed a long innings at the wicket, the performance of the government was greatly inferior to its counterpart States in the West or in the North. Our analyses have further shown that in terms of the assessment of the macro-needs of the State, seizure of the environmental opportunities and responding to the challenges to the development decades, there has been a dismal failure on the part of the State Government.

As a matter of fact, our earlier references to the discriminating acts of the Centre do not absolve the State from its own share of responsibility. One can cite four typical instances from the Naxalite era:

- (a) The miserable record of achievement of West Bengal in rural electrification

is well-known. Those who are in the know of things at the Rural Electrification Corporation in New Delhi are struck as much by the enterprise of Haryana or Mysore or Tamil Nadu as by the lassitude of West Bengal despite the initiative taken by the 'friends' of West Bengal in New Delhi.

- (b) A 'key' official figure in the financial circle of decision-making, while seeking to help West Bengal, was taken aback at the naivete of the government officials charged with the financial and developmental responsibilities. Project evaluation techniques were like Chinese abaci to them!

- (c) A well-known private sector house pursued for a long time with the State government the scheme of setting up a cement factory in a backward district bordering Bihar. The wild goose chase was given up in 1969. The story was substantially confirmed by a government official.

- (d) The concerned ministry in New Delhi was more worked up for pushing the television project for Calcutta than the local government. While Maharashtra, Punjab and the U.P. have asked for feeder T.V. stations in Poona, Amritsar and Dehra Dun (or some such place) respectively, the Government of West Bengal, despite the knowledge that Durgapur has a sound case for consideration, could not be easily persuaded to stir out of its inertia.

The point that we wish to make out is that cold statistics do not necessarily convey the message in Centre-State relations. One can make bold to

infer, in this case, that the Central Government remained 'cold' to West Bengal in respect of one fundamental issue; that is, that the upstairs administration in West Bengal remained completely soaked in a *laissez faire* attitude, being thus incongruous with the needs of the time which the Centre tolerated from 1947 till now. For that matter, the U.F. government and its predecessor government led themselves down the path of folly by turning blind to the reality of the administration's failure.

The statement calls for elucidation. *Laissez faire* does not stand for private sector orientation, nor does it mean abdication of all responsibility. The bureaucrats in West Bengal, like their counterparts anywhere, will respond to various typologies of attitude and behaviour. One such is that of Anthony Downs (1967), according to whom there are five types of officials:

Purely self-interested types	Mixed motive types
—climbers	—zealots
—conservers	—advocates
	—statesmen

The Bengal bureaucrats can, no doubt, be identified according to these arche-types or any combinations of them and in that sense they are responsive to their own needs. Thus, they are not abdicants.

The hall-mark of differentiation, however, it is suggested, lies in their dissociation from a sense of responsibility towards production. A social scientist has recently given expression to this distinct culture of Bengal in the following words: 'Introduction of permanent settlement in the last century created a class of absentee landlords, who had a secure income in land and who, because of this, as well as because of the habit of undertaking economic activities under patronage of political cover, did not normally want to take risks in mercantile activities in the

first phase and manufacturing and industrial activities in the latter phase of the colonial rule. The class had access to education and employment in the tertiary sector, which came up as an ancillary to the colonial rule. It had an intellectual life which was free from the responsibility of production of wealth.' (Roy Burman, 1971).

The Bengal bureaucrats belong to this tradition of 'super-structure.' The 'under-carriage', the 'base' is for them the 'given.' It is 'presumed' to be there. Two hundred years of British rule has strengthened that given base, more or less a 'tripod.' People of the lower strata are there to ensure the gross needs of culture, that is, agriculture. 'Petty' traders from Bihar and Rajasthan are there to ensure the regularity of local distribution and supplies and the 'heathen' Scots and their substitutes, the Marwaris, have 'underwritten' the cool comfort of a cultural existence which is metropolitan Calcutta. In this scheme of things, the government machinery cannot, need not, be perceived as the agent of change. The concept that the bureaucrats should themselves become the targets of change before they become the agents of change is thus inconceivable.

Production functions are indeed the necessities of life but 'necessity' does not elevate the associated activities beyond where their real place is, the pale of 'inferior culture.' In that respect share-croppers, traders and technocrats represent in their work and worth that 'inferior culture.' In pre- and post-independent Bengal, the relationship between a bureaucrat-boss and a technocrat-subordinate will in a significant way resemble that which used to be between an absentee landlord and his 'work-soiled' estate manager. A technocrat in West Bengal enjoys status, autonomy and psychological success which are likely to be lesser in substance compared to

what he enjoys in Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat. In a sense, a bureaucrat can convert himself into a technocrat in these States in that he can become a pro-active learner and result-oriented. The 'ghost' of the permanent settlement does not abide in SICOM or in the several regional development boards set up in Maharashtra.

Earlier, we have described the state of affairs with Howrah's small scale industry. We have also stated that this heavily concentrated small industry belt is geographically located close to the seat of government. The point is that this phenomenal lack of concern for the vital sector is no accident. A study confined to 396 sample units indicates that 'most of the entrepreneurs belong to a particular caste, "Mahishyas", (a lower caste).' The bureaucratic tradition, as it were, could not be soiled by interaction with the minions of 'inferior culture.'

There is also an hierarchy in this 'inferior culture': the further away one is from the centre of production the higher status one enjoys. A white collar employee is superior to a cab driver who is superior to a motor mechanic. There are several consequences of this attitude towards 'production work.' In the first place, the attitude of 'inferior status' of production work is well dispersed. If one is 'involved' in it, that is because one is forced to. At any point of time, the 'white collar' job is preferable. The point is not that many Bengalis are on 'shop floor jobs.' The point is that in terms of 'value' preference, a 'clean' job has higher subjective utility. One is not too sure, however, if the members of the so-called 'lower' social strata, like the *Mahishyas* also subscribe to this value orientation.

Secondly, a sharp unhealthy distinction exists between work of the 'intellect' and work of the

'hands.' That in concept and in reality, particularly in today's context, no such distinction can meaningfully be maintained hardly matters. Since this distinction is being maintained in attitude and behaviour, the top-brass bureaucrats in West Bengal have all along been less 'committed' to 'production realities' of planning efforts in West Bengal.

Thirdly, because of the unrealistic dichotomy of 'clean' and 'soiled' work, a value orientation has developed in favour of office work as against field work. It is better to be a Deputy Secretary in an innocuous department rather than be a District Magistrate. In 1970, several senior secretaries to government refused to accept an offer of promotion to Divisional Commissionership because of several reasons, one of which is the low status of field work.

Fourthly, the lack of production-orientation has brought about a culture against 'human resource' concept. There has never been any attempt towards manpower planning in terms of the bureaucrats' own interests and aspirations, and management development in terms of realisation of their potential. What have often contributed to postings to key positions are, seniority, availability, interpersonal relationship, and expediency. One can, to give an example, make a study of the contrasting decision-making processes for selecting the Finance Secretary in the States of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. We have already mentioned the consequence of such a naive approach in selecting the Personnel Manager for the Durgapur Steel Plant.

Fifthly, there is a lack of appreciation for performance appraisal. Unless, such is the firm-footed tradition in West Bengal, an official is guilty of corrupt practices, he is safe and his promotions are ensured. On the other hand, an official with

a reputation for initiative, imagination and task-orientation will not earn any material or social advancement. He may even be looked upon as a deviant, to be tolerated. Positive reinforcement is singularly lacking in the entire administrative set-up. 'To get along' is the *sine qua non* of existence.

Sixthly, the 'superior culture' orientation which is disoriented towards performance has invested the Bengal bureaucrats with an air of 'wisdom' (undertone of arrogance) so that they do not have to learn from the administrative culture of Bombay or Ahmedabad or Madras. It is not that they are averse to travelling; they are disinclined to internalising. In recent months, a 18-item crash programme has been announced for West Bengal. One item in the programme is the development of a SICOM-type organisation for West Bengal. It is not as if the Bengal bureaucrats were all along unaware of what role the SICOM was involved in in Maharashtra. A pride in 'insularity' and an inclination to preserve that insularity have been rendering the bureaucrats more and more dysfunctional for the new role they have been commissioned to by the social pressures. Recently, the Tamil Nadu government has engaged the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, to expose its senior cadre of administration to the knowledge and skills of the management sciences. It is doubtful if West Bengal will take any notice of this development.

Lastly, the 'hot-house' tradition of the bureaucrats has received the rudest shock from the traumatic experiences since 1967. The shock has brought about a state of bewilderment and psychological defeat. So, whenever it is mentioned that in October 1971, 247 factories are 'still closed' and 264 factories are 'permanently closed', the message that gets conveyed is this: 'we officials can do nothing about it. Will you A. L. Dias or

S. S. Ray like to do something about it? If so, what are your plans?' In the current spate of high tension, perhaps such groping in the dark is unexceptionable.

Given this analysis, we believe that the action steps on a priority basis could be as follows.

In the first place, there is need for an appropriate forum for developing a system-based action plan. In other words, the problem is so multi-faceted that a simplistic action plan arising out of the 'hat' of one or two persons may not be adequate. Besides, too many emotionally involved persons should not man the forum. Their problem-solving 'biases' may vitiate the outcome. In that sense, neither the strong 'law and order' protagonists nor the 'free for all' democrats would be the best candidates for this forum.

Secondly, one major challenge to this forum will be to develop a scheme for a viable administrative system for West Bengal. One fruitful lead might be to adopt a cybernetic approach. It is an axiom today that in a rapidly changing environment, an administrative system can survive only through change of structure and behaviour, an attribute that is referred to as 'ultrastability.' The propensity to change structure and behaviour in order that the enacted environment can be dealt with competently will require an innovation-prone, excellence-oriented work culture which has to be ushered into West Bengal through a task-force of administrative 'statesman.'

Thirdly, the forum will have to identify the 'critical' jobs in the top echelons and man them with the potential change-agents whom we refer to as the administrative statesmen. The search mechanism has to be cast far and wide so that the achievement prone Bengal bureaucrats located in New Delhi and elsewhere could be requisitioned for the purpose. In case the supply



falls short of demand, other sources could also be tapped. An excitingly challenging administrative assignment has recently been given to a trade union leader.

Fourthly, the task-force of change agents, once picked up and brought together, should be encouraged to draw from the knowledge, insight and experiences of resource persons, irrespective of their status and location. This group will require a constant flow of innovative ideas.

Fifthly, the entire administrative system has to be slowly but steadily geared to performance orientation for which appropriate appraisal systems have to be developed. Once the willingness to be performance oriented is established, the development of systems is a task not beyond human competence. This is not to suggest that the class III and class IV staff should be the pioneers to be put under an 'efficiency scheme.' On the contrary, the performance appraisal system linked with reward base, should begin with the top two tiers and only after the new culture has stabilised its influence should efforts be put to generate intrinsic motivation among the other ranks to go performance-oriented.

Lastly, a major task seems to be warranted in terms of value and behaviour change among the administrators. The tradition fostered by the *laissez faire* company culture, (East India Company) according to which production work is low premium stuff, will need to be replaced by a work-ethic culture. The emphasis on 'efforts' will need to be supplemented by the emphasis on 'results.' But, the hardship of transition from one culture to another will require a process-management programme so as to create conditions for learning rather than for punishment.

Our prescription may appear to be unexciting. This is admit-

ted. We have isolated one key variable from a complex social phenomenon and offered some suggestions as to how to go about reorienting the administration. We believe that is where the task of rebuilding West Bengal could be initiated.

Our rationale for isolating the role of the bureaucrats as crucial in the present juncture is built on this premise. The people of urban Bengal, particularly the vocal minority exposed to the fruits of the feudal-commercial culture of Calcutta, would not be the best bet for the social change-agent role. They will, however, continue to play, at times functionally, the professional protester role. At the same time, they will be loud in their militancy and advocacy of extreme forms of protest, unless their *status quo* is ensured. This would require a new orientation in the administration: a change-over from the side-line umpire role to an active entrepreneur role in building up an industrial-commercial West Bengal.

But this is one-half of the requirement. The vast, not-so-silent masses in rural Bengal, are also in no mood, thanks to the stirrings caused by the economico-political mobilisations in the country-side, to tolerate their relative deprivation and are looking for fulfilment of new aspirations. A solid foundation for a productive system, sufficiently egalitarian and flexible, is thus an urgent need which the legacy of the bureaucracy does not warrant. That smugness has to go. That a Block Development Officer or a District Collector is an integrated part of a complex production system rather than an ornament for the State Secretariat involves a change-process, painful no doubt, but essential.

Let us complete the circle. In early 1969, a business organisation of Calcutta undertook a rural survey programme. A

part of the report reads as follows:

'Gourcharan Mouza in the Siliguri sub-division of Darjeeling... is situated in the area which has now attained limelight in connection with the Naxalbari movement...

'The land in this area is of a very low fertility and is totally dependent on rainfall, there being no arrangement for irrigation. The total cultivated area of the village is 250 acres, of which exactly half is occupied by a pineapple plantation. About 250 acres are usually cultivated with jute and the rest are put under a single crop of local variety of Bhadai paddy. Even in good years... the produce barely exceeds 5/6 mds. of paddy per bigha.

'The entire area is owned by five families living in towns. All the 51 households in the village—all belonging to tribal community—are share croppers with small parcels of land or none at all...

'There is no school... in the village. No newspaper reaches it. There are no transistor radio sets. The only new acquisitions are three bicycles purchased during the last three years.

'One of the land-owners has constructed recently a two-storied wooden house.'

Since the death of Henry Derozio, West Bengal and India have grown by one hundred and thirty years. During this period *Gourcharan Mouza* in Naxalbari area has progressed to the extent of acquisition of three bicycles. We believe that, should the pace of change and the direction of change become qualitatively different from what we encounter today at *Gourcharan Mouza*, the West Bengal cadre of the higher Administrative Services will be required to play a much more competent role than what has been possible since the days of Robert Clive.

# The industrial picture

SARWAR LATEEF

PERHAPS the most disturbing feature of the Indian economy of 1971 is the stagnation that seems to have set in on the industrial front. In the first five months of the calendar year, the growth in industrial output was a pathetic 1.8 per cent over the corresponding period of 1970. This compares with a 4.8 per cent increase recorded in the general index for industrial production in the whole of 1970 over 1969 and a 7.1 per cent increase recorded in 1969 over 1968. The Industrial Develop-

ment Ministry has been busy trying to find excuses for this. The two explanations that Moinul Haque Choudhury trots out with unfailing and monotonous regularity is that the index with base year 1960 does not reflect the performance of the post-1960 growth sectors of the economy and that small scale industries which fall outside the scope of the index compiled by the D.G.T.D. have been doing rather well.

Both points are of little substance. The so-called growth industries have not been doing particularly well in recent months and if they were adequately represented by the index, it is by no means certain that the index would show a significant upward spurt. As for small industries, there is absolutely no evidence to support the view that their growth has been impressive. The 11 per cent figure which the Minister for Industrial Development is fond of citing and which has even been circulated in more sophisticated circles, it is now conceded officially, was the result of an arithmetical error in the programme fed to the computer!

**W**hy, then, is industrial output stagnant? Shortage of raw materials is clearly a very important factor, particularly in the case of raw cotton and steel which affect the all important textile and engineering industries. Assuming that the war and the foreign aid cuts do not greatly affect supplies, the pace of imports suggests that this problem ought to be easing by now.

The second most important factor is the emergence in a number of vital sectors of capacity constraints: paper, newsprint, soda ash, caustic soda and calcium carbide, to name a few industries. This is a direct result of low levels of investment in the past few years.

The third factor is the under-utilisation of capacity in the

capital goods and engineering sector, reflecting both the shortage of steel and the lack of demand that is again a product of low public and private investment.

The fourth factor is labour discontent. While this is primarily a West Bengal problem with essentially political connotations, it is not unrelated to low investment levels. There is rarely a good correlation between job insecurity and rising unemployment on the one hand and industrial peace on the other.

**W**hile the problem of raw material shortages is being tackled effectively in a purely short term sense, the critical long term problem, for which there is still no coherent short or long term policy, is the slow-down in public and private investment. Public investment has never quite recovered from the low drought year levels of 1965-66 and 1966-67. In real terms, it may have even fallen considerably. The Bangla Desh crisis will now most certainly eat into investible funds in both 1971-72 and 1972-73. The extent to which the cost of the war and of the rehabilitation of Bangla Desh can be prevented from encroaching on India's plan priorities will depend on the extent to which efforts are made to raise resources from untapped areas such as the agricultural sector.

Private investment normally takes its cue from public investment and there is little doubt that the low levels of public investment have proved a considerable depressant on corporate investment. But, that is only one side of the picture. The other side of the picture that over the last four years New Delhi has effectively sat upon any proposals that have emanated from the so called 'monopoly houses' to raise private investment. The cost to the nation of Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed's

stewardship of the Industrial Development Ministry is probably astronomical. The Era of the Great Dither that he ushered in is only just coming to an end. Moinul Haque Choudhury's task of reversing these trends is unenviably difficult, not least because the Company Law Department which was hived off from the Industrial Development Ministry in order to put Dinesh Singh in his place, is now a law unto itself. Furthermore, bureaucrats who have been taught that the art of survival lies in sleeping over industrial license applications will not be easily shaken out of their slumber.

But Choudhury is trying. He claims that his Ministry has issued 510 licenses and 732 letters of intent in the first ten months of 1971 as against 363 licenses and 438 letters of intent in 1970. These figures do not reveal very much about the total value of fresh investment approved. It is an acknowledged fact, for example, that the number of licenses approved for 'new undertakings' or 'substantial expansions' is pathetically low, particularly for units that belong to the 75 larger industrial houses, and are required to prove either that the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act does not apply to their proposals or that, if it does apply, their expansion proposal will not lead to an increase in the concentration of economic power 'to the common detriment'. Most of the licenses issued are for 'carry on business' necessitated by the new licensing policy which revived licensing in many delicensed industries.

**T**he Minister of Industrial Development's accusation that the larger houses are on a capital strike bears little relation to fact. Most industrial houses have a number of sound expansion proposals or fresh investment proposals, and their companies are generating enough funds to meet some part

of the investment requirements. Such proposals are just not being cleared fast enough, and the shortages which are emerging in various sectors at a critical time like this are a direct result of this failure to approve the investment plans of companies that are in a position to deliver the goods.

The new industrial licensing policy and the MRTP Act have not helped. On a narrow interpretation of these, the larger industrial houses which account for a very substantial chunk of private sector assets are virtually barred from expansion in their traditional lines and, in theory, confined to a core sector. The rationale for this policy is that the larger industrial houses with their experience and capability should not be concentrating on soaps and hair oil but contributing to the country's development by investing the substantial sums required in the core sector industries.

**B**ut, here lie two contradictions. First, the conglomerate structure of industrial houses together with the fiscal and other restrictions on inter-corporate investment prevents these larger houses from mobilising funds of the order required. This means that while, say, in the case of Tatas, which have a share in a large number of companies whose assets together may amount to several hundred crores, their ability to generate funds for financing a particular project is largely dependent on the size of the particular Tata company that wants to expand. Since most Indian companies are pathetically small by international comparisons, expansion is not possible without borrowing from public financial institutions. And here the company concerned must live with the Damocles sword of the 'convertibility' clause. This does scare some companies off.

The principle behind the convertibility clause is sound.

But why deprive companies of the option of self finance through inter-corporate investment? The explanation for this seems to lie in the belief of those who were responsible for that curious document, the Dutt Licensing Committee Report, that all further core sector development must be in the 'joint sector'. Second, by confining large industrial houses to the core sector, government is expecting their assets to grow not by one or two crores at a time but by Rs. 20 or 30 crores. This naturally attracts the interest of those who believe this will lead to an intolerable increase in the concentration of economic power. Thus, if the licensing policy doesn't get you, then the MRTP Act will!

In theory, of course, a liberal definition of the words 'to the common detriment' would permit the larger industrial houses to get around these obstacles, as they have done recently when a chastened Raghunath Reddy is believed to have cleared a number of proposals. But, by and large, the populist political environment has made ministers and bureaucrats terribly scared of taking any decisions that would appear to favour the larger industrial houses. The system, however, still gives ample scope to those industrial houses which have over the years perfected the technique of greasing their way through regulations and red tape, and remains a source of political corruption. Those who suffer most are the few honest and efficient companies.

**I**ronically, the system has ostensibly been designed to prevent the kind of abuse to which industrial licensing had been subjected on evidence dug out by the Hazari and Dutt Reports. Yet, it ignores the main lesson to be learnt from these reports: that there is a high correlation between the existence of these controls and the growth of the so-called

'monopoly houses'. The logical policy conclusion would have been to dismantle the controls altogether except where strictly necessary, as, for example, in conserving a scarce resource like foreign exchange. Instead, typically, another attempt has been made to block the loopholes, thus perpetuating a system that rewards the inefficient and the dishonest. There is, however, one major difference between the Mark I and Mark II versions of India's licensing policy. The Mark I version, despite its obvious failings, at least did not restrict industrial investment and growth!

**T**he whole approach to industrial policy in recent years has been vitiated by the populist political framework in which it has been conceived—a framework in which size is blindly equated with concentration, in which an industrialist is loosely termed a 'monopolist', in which the common man in whose defence the socialist battle is being fought is really a lower middle class or upper working class figure with strong petite bourgeois instincts and aspirations, in which there is virtually no attempt to understand modern technology and modern economics. Witness, for instance, the hue and cry over the price of cars or over the delays in the 'people's car' project. Contrast this with the deafening silence on such vital issues as mass urban, rapid, transport systems. Witness the great concern for the small scale industrialist. Who is this small industrialist anyway? Very often he is connected with the larger industrial houses. Typically he is exploitative in his relations with labour and the consumer, and despite being an inefficient producer, takes advantage of the peculiarities of the Indian market to maintain and enjoy huge profit margins and indulge in ostentatious, conspicuous consumption.

At the root of all this is the confusion within government on

means and ends. There are those in the Council of Ministers, like Raghunath Reddy, who believe—in all sincerity—that the mixed economy has reached a 'dead end' and that 'it is time to think of a change'. There are others who believe the mixed economy is still essential in the transition to socialism. And, there are many within the ruling party who believe that the mixed economy is an end in itself, and that so long as the public sector dominates the 'commanding heights' no further extension of public ownership is necessary. Until the ruling party decides where precisely it wants to go, government policy will reflect this confusion, and ministries and policies will be pulling in different directions.

**I**n fairness, it is necessary to point out that the private sector has done little to strengthen its case. It has, with some notable exceptions, acquiesced in inefficient production structures and inferior technology. It has shown little concern for the consumer, either in terms of price or quality. And, by its decision to enter the political fray and attempt to influence the political process in its favour, it has not only displayed short sightedness and political naivete but also invited the kind of unhealthy attention that it is now getting. One must assume that the lesson has been learnt.

If one also assumes that the Raghunath Reddys represent a minority view and that the ruling party is committed to a mixed economy either as a means to an end or as an end in itself, it follows that if the government is to deliver the goods, it cannot allow industrial stagnation to continue. A drastic restructuring of industrial policy is required to give a forward push. There are firm indications that the government is aware of this but that pre-occupations with Bangla Desh have postponed a serious attempt to look at this problem.

It is not my intention here to spell out in detail the mechanics of a viable industrial policy. But it may be useful to list some of the elements of such a policy.

**F**irst, the cornerstone of a successful industrial policy in a mixed economy must be, at the risk of stating the obvious, an efficiently managed, efficiently run public sector. This is the only effective safeguard against concentration of economic power. It can also become a major vehicle of industrial growth. For this, the entire structure and functioning of the public sector will have to be overhauled introducing modern management systems and drawing inspiration from Italy and France on structures and control systems.

Second, the emphasis must now shift from import substitution to export promotion if self-sufficiency is to be the main aim. This implies that the choice of industrial investments must be confined to those items that can be produced on an internationally competitive basis and that industrial growth, particularly in consumer goods, must be export based. The implications of this may well be much greater standardisation, a move away from excessive product and brand differentiation, and production on much larger scales than we have so far been used to. With a domestic market as large as India's, decisions on scale of production and plant size must be influenced by considerations of price and quality. There is really no choice to be made between small and large industry. The two are essentially complementary, and if the sole criterion is efficiency, plant size will be appropriate to the level of efficiency required.

Third, if India follows the second point to its logical conclusion, there is bound to emerge monopolistic and oligopolistic marketing conditions in many areas. This need not be a bad thing provided, of course,

adequate safeguards are built into the system—a vigilant Restrictive Trade Practices Commission, a dynamic public sector, and competition through a more liberal import policy which is implicit in an export oriented production sector. The corollary of this is that the Monopolies Commission will have to be wound up. Its relevance to an economy such as ours is limited.

Four, the question both government and industry need to ask themselves is whether private sector industry as it is presently structured and constituted can deliver the goods in an export oriented framework. The private sector has, no doubt, displayed considerable dynamism in this country. But, its growth has taken place in a highly protected environment and in a sellers market conditions. If it were forced to operate in a more hostile environment where its efficiency would be properly tested, two weaknesses would emerge: the family based, non-professional management of vast chunks of the private sector might not stand the strain over time. And, the haphazard and irrational nature of conglomerate operations that are a historical inheritance from the managing agency system would prove a liability rather than an asset.

**T**here are two policy implications of this: (a) Industrial policy must encourage the professionalisation of companies and, through mergers and re-organisations, move away from haphazard conglomerate structures towards companies that are large by international standards and cover an integrated and interconnected field of operations. (b) Fiscal and other policies must ensure, through a sticks and carrots approach, rewards to the efficient and honest and disincentives to the fiddlers and operators. This, in turn, implies a move away from controls of all kinds and the distortions these produce.

# Tool for nation building

SUGATA DASGUPTA

CENTRE State relations in the context of a 'multi-cultural' State are an important tool for nation building. It should not therefore be reckoned as a mere mechanical device for the regulation of constitutional relations between the two tiers of government. The function is positive. Centre State relations in India, similarly, do not represent only a body of rules which guide the routine working of governments or prevent frictional tendencies as and when they arise, but it must help to weld the various cultural constituents of a nation into an integrated whole. This is what has been missing so long.

Centre State relations have hitherto been looked upon as a casual manoeuvre or at best a purposeless gymnastic between the States and the government at Delhi. It is a mini war of greed and power in which representatives of the Centre—persons and not institutions—seek to establish their sham supremacy, as the States bargain, higgledy and indulge in monotonous 'Centre' baiting to get as much crumbs for themselves as possible! What is required in this connection is, therefore, a reappraisal of the entire situation so that Centre State relations in India are placed on a scientific footing.

The task can only be achieved when one analyses the various contrary 'pulls' that make for political disharmony, tension and conflict. That is the theme of this paper.

It is in two parts. In the first, an attempt is made to analyse certain inner contradictions of the Indian polity and to define the contrary pulls which need careful examination before one can comprehend what is wrong with the situation. The treatment here is diagnostic. The other contains a set of tentative recommendations and a plea for a fresh new approach that, in the opinion of the present writer, is urgently required to mobilise the divergent cultural forces into a well knit harmonious system.

Centre State relations in India have, however, been historically determined by three important considerations. First of all is the great indecision or ambivalence on the part of the Indian political elite to come to any conclusion regarding the status of the republic itself. Whether India is a 'unitary' or a 'federal organization', thus still remains, after twenty five years of Independence, an unresolved riddle. The confusion, however, is not wholly accidental. It is systemic

and to a great extent even functional. It also has an insular function as it allows the 'contrary pulls' of the Indian polity—the inner contradictions of the system—a free play. These might otherwise have been curbed and driven underground, had the constitution been unequivocally declared 'unitary' or even 'federal'. There is no doubt that such a policy of suppression would have surely undermined the health of the nation.

**T**he free expression of the contrary pulls, however, becomes functional as it helps the Centre to perform its two main tasks, namely, system 'maintenance' and 'development'. Whatever free play is necessary for the continuation of the political system and the integrity of the nation as well as for the development of its people has, thus, obtained a natural and systemic sanction.

That indeed has kept India going. While this ambivalence of the Constitution, the sanction for free play of contrary pulls and the fulfilment thereby of the goals of the Centre, provide three salient characteristics of the Indian polity and prevent its disintegration, they also account, if one may say so, for the weakness of the system. These are the very characteristics, again, which necessitate a fresh look at the 'Centre State' relations and will probably help to determine the future too. The new relationship which might emerge, as one seeks to revise the existing pattern, will thus have to keep these implications in view. The three salient characteristics are, therefore, vital for an understanding of the political process. For, they determine Centre State relations now, will do so in future and may even help if the treatment is meaningful to strengthen the forces of nation building in India. I will explain what I mean.

The experts are divided in their opinion about the nature

and character of the Indian Constitution as well as about the type of government that India has. There is a view that the Constitution is unitary, while others maintain that it is federal. There is then a similar question about the form of government. Is the government 'presidential' or 'parliamentary'? Our opinion is that the truth lies somewhere in between and the Indian Constitution is neither unitary nor federal. It is quasi-unitary and the country is run by no other than a cabinet form of parliamentary government.

The real test of the pudding, however, lies in the eating. Since every constitution has both a formal as well as an informal structure, one has to analyse both in order to find out how it affects Centre State relations. A formal political structure may thus represent a particular form of government but the informal structure that obtains can be very different. That is indeed what has happened in India. For, there is no doubt that the makers of the Indian Constitution, as they rejected the 'grouping' proposal put forward by the cabinet mission, had indeed rejected with it the very idea of a 'federation'. The option then was clearly in favour of a strong Centre and for a united country, as also for consolidation of power and a single focus of control.

**E**ven when democratic decisions were formulated at that crucial period of transition, most of them were the decisions of a benevolent 'oligarchy' which was then functioning at the Centre. The democratic concurrence of the proposals followed. The decision, for example, of the incorporation of the princely States in the Indian union, even when the leaders of the State's Peoples' Congress in all the States were not always sure of its benefits, was of the Centre. The opinion of the res-

pective units so necessary in a democracy, was either obtained later or bypassed wherever necessary. From those early days of independence, the Indian elite had thus swung towards a unitary form of government and a strong Centre, although the same leaders had never given up in their sub-conscious, the fond dream of building a great real federation of the free people of India. Viewed from these perspectives, the Indian Constitution can be described as 'unitary' in practice and 'federal' in profession.

**H**istorically, however, the exact nature of the 'practice' of 'unitarism' has been uneven! It follows a zig-zag path, the exact pattern and the specific role of governments in India being determined by two contradictory pulls. One seeks to make the 'Centre' omnipotent and the other wants to erode its powers. The former aims at consolidating the position of the national elite called in popular parlance 'all-India leaders'. The other, those who represent the 'pull' from the States, strengthen the position of the State elite. While one school maintains that the 'Centre' is to be ruled by 'all-India' leaders, policies and institutions, the other emphasizes that 'State' policies must dominate the total scene and the Centre be run by a federation of State elites. The establishment of the 'syndicate' in the Congress Party and the Rajmanner Committee that comes now, provide excellent examples of this line of thinking.

The all-India leaders who obviously had first dominated the scene were people of charisma and a product of British prisons. They supported a set of leaders in the States who—largely the creation of the former—helped to consolidate the base. As a result, it was evident that the leadership which ruled Delhi did not function only at a macro-level but was well rooted at the base. The State elite, however, came to the

scene later. They started asserting gradually from the early fifties and unlike the charismatic leaders, owed their sanction from all those who functioned down below in districts and sub regions. They drew sustenance from the base.

The two sets of leaders and their policies, however, remained poised for long against each other pulling their weight both downwards and upwards from time to time. The exact nature of Centre State relations, at any given point of time, was thus determined by the weight of these pulls, the swing sometimes being 'Statewards' and sometimes towards the Centre. Dynamic and not static in style, the chief feature of such a policy was indecision.

Nehru was the supreme political catalyst in those early days of freedom and was responsible to a great extent for the consolidation of both these trends. Sitting at the fulcrum of the see-saw he encouraged such indecision. Allowing a free play of both the forces, he strengthened them in turns. The pull in favour of the 'Centre' was thus consolidated in his regime by a number of effective devices, the most important of which were the creation of the planning commission, the establishment of a National Development Council and the ever increasing financial powers of the Centre. The latter secured such resources at its disposal that the States were reduced almost to the status of municipalities as compared to the former.

As Nehru strengthened the central power, he also helped, at the same time, to nurture and bring into being a new cadre of State leaders. A number of steps taken in his time had helped the process, the most important of which were the reorganization of States on a linguistic basis and the support he provided to many dissident Chief Ministers, such as Dr

B. C. Roy, to defy openly the central fiat. The critics of Jawaharlal Nehru who found in these steps nothing but a policy of vacillation and weakness cannot, however, be dismissed as all wrong.

Yet this non-vigour, this indecision, has been India's destiny for many many years. It has been her main strength and vigour. It is in attempts like these, true to the traditions of the *Mahabharata*, that the main task according to Rabindranath Tagore becomes the creation of a 'cadence of order'. In a sprawling, unweildy and chaotic polity that was and still remains the India of the day, one can then find in the absence of a definite policy probably a policy of some fundamental importance! Was the 'indecision' of that era, then, Nehru's decision? Was the free play of forces to ensure that the dormant potentialities of both the camps were brought to the fore till their respective strengths were assessed and the final shape of the Indian polity emerged clear?

The ultimate pattern of Centre State relations was then to be the outcome not of competitions, clashes and violence but of synthesis, understanding and accommodation. The other goal of such a policy or of the 'no policy' so to say was to provide both the 'pulls' and 'forces' with some legitimate role in the total system. Nehru did not want therefore to come to a decision about either of the trends and provided in this way his sanction to the multi plurality of the Indian polity. It was probably for this very reason that Nehru did not want Morarji Desai, a man of iron decisions, to take charge of the country and impose his various 'formulae' on the different sectors of life and society in India, however good these might have been for the nation at large.

The decision about the future of Centre State relations should therefore be carefully evolved

and not taken in a hurry. It should be based on a realistic appraisal of the needs of the country and that of the comparative positions of the two groups of elites who, between themselves, represent the multi-cultural nation. How difficult it is to arrive at a ready decision in the matter may be evident from a brief appraisal of certain significant political events that took place over the last two decades in this country. These follow and provide not only clues to the understanding of the respective positions of the two elites but also indicate the steps that seem logical in such contexts. The latter must, at least, ensure that both the 'forces' and the 'pulls' find their logical places in the new scheme of things and a decision that emerges is really more 'functional' than the 'indecisions' of the past.

The gradual emergence of a State elite and of some type of a 'federation' of the new forces has, despite all the trends of centralization, been the main feature of this period. There was also a steady erosion of power of all central bodies including the Parliament and the C.P.P., so much so that the selection of the second Prime Minister of India, the successor to Jawaharlal Nehru—was done without any reference to a central body. The erosion spread gradually and the process intensified in stages. It took a new turn in 1967. As is well known, a number of different parties came to power in the different States of the country that year and clamoured for more autonomy. They raised the slogan of near sovereignty in most of their internal affairs, the advice to the 'Centre' being that its functions should be no more than that of a passive umpire.

The development of the thesis of 'non-congressism' by Ram Manohar Lohia and the consequent erosion of the central power in the Congress Party



and the country had led almost to a total collapse of the moral and political leadership of the Centre during this period. The failure of 'coalitions' in the States and the final split in the 'Congress Party', however, gave a new turn to events. The tide was once more in favour of the Centre. A charismatic leader was back to power. Controlling two thirds of the members of Parliament, she brought back the spirit of the old times and handled the political game with care and tact.

A number of State leaders, mouthpieces mostly of the Centre and not of the forces down below, quickly came up and were put into positions of power. The State elite were in disarray. Barring the C.P.I.(M) in West Bengal, the D.M.K. in Madras and the Jana Sangh in some parts of the country, the challenges to central 'power' then seemed minimal in such a scheme of things. That scheme still continues in India today and holds the reins of power in the country. A leader of vigour and decision is able at last to climb the saddle of power for the first time in recent history!

It will be wrong, however, for a reviewer of political events to come to the conclusion that a decisive victory has now been scored and the logic of events should naturally mean a 'centre'-ward move in Centre State relations. The peculiarities of the Indian political situation would, on the other hand, still call for a balanced approach! The two pulls together, notwithstanding the temporary reverse suffered by one of them, will still provide the main determinant of the Indian political situation.

The makers of Centre State relations must recognise this supreme social reality of political life in India and provide for necessary institutional devices. The Rajmanner Committee has, even at this hour, when the State elite are in disarray, demanded what can be

called a full transfer of power from the national elite to the State. The C.P.I.(M) has raised a new slogan challenging the Centre. They want that the right to secession now banned in India, should be a legal right. All these may be far cries. But the writing on the wall continues and one must understand that any ex-parte decision in Centre State relations is bound to precipitate the situation. The final set up should, therefore, be the product of some sort of a federal or coalitional arrangements that must ultimately provide institutional expression to both the types of elites and urges.

Recognizing the overriding role that the Centre is bound to play in the years to come, what is necessary now is to adopt a set of devices which would legitimatise the aspirations of the State elites and of all those who function still nearer the base. While strengthening the cabinet and the Parliament which represent the national elite, it will be necessary, therefore, to provide for certain definitive institutional arrangements which would help fructify the role of the State elite and others. It would require two important devices, one that assures the State elite of the *bonafides* of the Centre and the other that seeks a new approach to Centre State relations. The purpose of the latter would be to make the relations more flexible. The Constitution must therefore provide for important defence mechanisms that would accommodate the new elites of different tiers and give each one of them a place in the total polity of the nation. That would require not only a redistribution of powers between the States and the Centre from time to time, but a similar co-sharing between the districts and the other regions on one hand and the State and the national set-up on the other.

The mechanisms will have to be tailored with care. Based on a realistic appraisal of con-

temporary history of political developments in India and abroad they must draw upon all the negative experiences and positive experiments of the decade. The 'negatives' of aggressive unitaryism of Yahya Khan for example, the relentless efforts in the British Isles to keep the Irish as a part of the United Kingdom, the rejection by the British electorate of the Liberal Party's proposal for three Parliaments in the U.K., the recent plans for decentralization in France and Yugoslavia, are some events of crucial significance which need to be taken into consideration in this matter. While these developments are to be studied, the Indian 'recipe' will, however, have to be indigenous and based on the needs of our peculiar ecology and culture. Certain important devices suggested by the Council for National Conventions some time back may merit some consideration in this regard. These are mentioned below.

The Council has made two sets of proposals. The first concerns the induction of two new institutions, one of which is already provided in the Constitution. The other is regarding the principle of distribution of powers between the States and the Centre. Let us discuss the first proposal first. One of the two institutions to be introduced is the inter-State Council, where all issues concerning the 'States' and the 'Centre' are to be referred, deliberated and decided upon. The other suggestion is for a Presidential Council, an advisory body which would guide the President to whom all matters of dispute relating to Centre State relations would ordinarily be referred.

The inter-State Council is provided for in the Constitution. The other is a new recommendation. Both these bodies, if they function under the Constitution, would go a long way to allay the misgivings of the State elite and assure them of

a fair deal in the matter of Centre State relations. It will also establish the *bonafides* of the Centre. The State elites are already seething with discontent. The best way to coopt them into the structure and to prevent increasing alienation is to create a forum for them. The inter-State Council will serve that purpose. The Presidential Council will give the nation an independent umpire, an institutional ombudsman, to whom the State elite as well as others could go with their complaints. That would prevent ceaseless 'Centre baiting' and the two institutions, together, will help to stabilise Centre State relations in India.

These devices will bring parity and balance among the two elites. But, a specific move will still be necessary to ensure that a number of 'others', elites both of districts and of the blocks and villages, are given similar opportunities to participate in national affairs. An institutional innovation suggested by the sarvodaya school in this regard is the introduction of indirect elections. The villagers would under the scheme send their representatives to the 'districts' and States. It is necessary, however, in the context of Centre State relations to carry this logic still further and give the representatives of blocks and villages a place in the Parliament. What is suggested, therefore, is a partial reconstitution of the upper house. The Rajya Sabha should include among others, representatives of Zila Parishads and a certain percentage of representatives of block councils coopted to it by rotation. The Rajya Sabha will then represent, together with the Lok Sabha, the country as a whole.

The three innovations suggested above are, however, not to be treated as sacrosanct. They merely illustrate a trend of development, a pattern that should emerge in order to give a positive direction to Centre

State relations. The urgent task is to realise that a 'plural', or rather, a 'multiple' elite has already come into being in India and it cannot be obliterated from the scene. What is more, this new unalterable fact of history is all to the good of the nation. The new elite already here and other elites who might gradually come up at various regions and sub regions of this country represent the new foci of social power. Bastions of dynamism, they are bound to strengthen the roots of the nation. What has only to be safeguarded is that these new forces do not clash with each other but are brought together and welded into an integrated unit. That goal can be achieved only by the fullest development of each of these 'groups' or 'forces' and not surely by their suppression.

Here comes the question of a new approach to Centre State relations. The latter should help realise the respective roles of the various tiers of the government. If the two goals of the Indian State are system maintenance and development, the Centre has to take these tasks seriously. The system is to be protected not only from the external enemy. What is equally important is that the integrity and stability of the system is maintained internally as well, and that the intra-societal forces are not allowed to wreck it. That would require a thorough reorientation of Centre State relations. A tool for nation building, it must now become a conscious policy for integration of such elites and institutions that gradually come up only when the process of self actualization is manifest everywhere. As more 'elites', or 'forces', and more political institutions come up at different levels of the country's administration, more powers will have to be transferred to them enabling the latter to deal with all problems of system maintenance and development at their own levels all by themselves. The new approach stresses the con-

cept of 'gradualism', i.e., of a gradual transfer of power—mainly the residuary ones—to institutions that function nearer the ground, keeping on to oneself at each successive 'higher levels', only such specific tasks and jobs which are not within the capacity of the institutions down below to accomplish.

The task of nation building is not easy. It can only be accomplished when the various groups and interests are incorporated in the total political system and the latter becomes a true 'federation' of all.

One word more about this theme. A great 'democratic' explosion is already under way. Every group of individuals, every State, province, culture, region, sub-region and sub-culture of every unit of human habitat have suddenly become conscious of their basic democratic rights. Never before in history had such a craze for self-determination swept the world! Not unlike the population explosion of the decade, the democratic explosion too creates vital problems. It creates new aspirations every day in many hearts and brings into existence new rallying points in every region of the country. These should not by any means also become the points of alienation from the main life of the nation. A conscious policy of political assimilation is, therefore, needed.

Such a policy should not suppress the new forces, but dig them up, recognize and strengthen them from time to time and give all of them a place in the total set-up. By the time the year 2000 A.D. approaches, no nation of the world will have survived what we choose to call the great 'democratic' explosion, unless the main theme of all national policies everywhere be 'nation building' and Centre State relations are looked upon as its most important tool.

# Management

ISHWAR DAYAL

MY analysis of problems in the public sector is based on a detailed study of five enterprises, a more general appraisal of ten others, and data culled from discussions with a number of executives from both private and public sectors. The purpose is to identify certain critical problems whose solutions might suggest a starting point towards the goals expected of public sector organisations.

First, I shall examine the general characteristics of man-

agement in India and then go on to define the public sector's problems which originate mostly from imprecise definition of the government's role and the inadequacy of the administrative system within the enterprise. Finally, I shall suggest an approach to the developing of a viable system in the enterprise.

Of the six types of business organisations in India, the dominating feature is a highly centralised decision making

apparatus vested mostly in the chief executive, in a small group of family members, or in a few trusted employees. Ascriptive values such as personal loyalty and friendship, consideration for age, paternal expression of authority, have greater emphasis than merit, for example, or skill or the authority that is based on knowledge.

There are, of course, several notable exceptions. In the large majority, however, the management system often enough possesses the following characteristics (Dayal, 1970):

1. Policy, operational and strategic decisions concerning production, sales, investment, expenditure and other activities, are all made at the top level, almost invariably by the chief executive. In public sector corporations, key decisions are invariably taken by the concerned ministry of the government. The director nominated to the Board by the government represents the ministry. Prior to a Board meeting, he consults his ministry for views on important issues. The opinions of the single director often outweigh those of the other members of the Board.
2. Subordinates become dependent on the top management for their needs both at work and in personal matters. Dependence may be observed in a system of patronage, in the restriction of the subordinate's authority in matters of manpower allocation, power to reward or punish his own subordinates, and

- i. The family business controlled by members of the family
- ii. The public enterprises controlled by the Government
- iii. The subsidiaries of foreign corporations with or without collaboration of an Indian family-owned group of entrepreneurs
- iv. The corporation with dispersed ownership
- v. Small firms managed by individual entrepreneurs
- vi. The cooperative managed by members who also hold equity interest in the organisation.

other measures that create uncertainty in the subordinate's decision-making role.

3. The domineering style of leadership is either paternal or autocratic. Organisations seldom have a management team operating in the real sense. Each person works independently of his peer. His superior relates to him individually. Inter-organisational relationship is restricted by the absence of the ethics of collaboration: for example, management-union and interdepartmental relationships breed suspicion and distrust.
4. The success or failure of the enterprise depends upon the chief executive's ability to generate personal loyalty among his subordinates in the organisation.
5. The corporate management tends to lay the blame for its failures exclusively on Government controls, licensing policy and protective labour legislation. These controls certainly have considerable impact on the internal management system. But the management seeks reasons for its failures exclusively beyond the system, not within it (Dayal, 1967).

Some additional characteristics of the public sector enterprises are:

1. The pattern of organisation uniformly follows the bureaucratic principles; for instance: (a) functional specialisation, a hierarchy which fosters relationships at levels of vertical command, and less concern for interdependence between functional tasks. Leonard Sayles (1964) has found that the manager's success depended on his ability to establish other kinds of relations outside his department than the superior-subordinate kind. In the public sector these other kinds of relations are seldom found. (b) Administrative strategy and relation-

ships governed by a web of rules and procedures, and not by the imperatives of the business. The maintenance of rules appears to become more important than the achievement of the primary task of the enterprise. This is reinforced by the control systems exercised by the government such as audit.

2. Interpersonal relationships are role-bound, not person-based. There is a clear attempt to de-personalise positions: the new man must behave as his predecessor did. People interact through the incidence of work and through the roles prescribed by their superiors rather than through the sharing of a common task.

3. The management control system is inadequate for achieving the primary objectives of the enterprise. In most cases the definition of the primary objective itself is vague and diffused.

An industrial organisation developed around these guidelines often has certain inbuilt characteristics: (Merton, et. al 1952; Pfiffner and Sherwood, 1960; Gouldner, 1954)

- \* Delays in execution of tasks.
- \* Tendency to develop cliques and power groups within the organisation and the need among people to search out and have god-fathers.
- \* Decisions taken by using win-lose strategy and the play of power groups and not on account of the rationality of the situation.

In a legal-rational system the administration has frequently to seek solutions by setting up innumerable committees, by fault finding, by piecemeal redress to the contiguous problems it faces.

The controls exercised by the superior authority emphasise maintenance of the system, not the performance. Committee

reports on the Sindri Fertilizer Plant, on the Durgapur Steel Plant, on the CSIR, emphasise non-compliance of rules more than the failure of the administrative organisation to achieve the primary objective.

Three large enterprises that wanted to recruit young people from an Institute of Management could not do so because the procedures laid down for fresh recruitment in the company required steps which did not coincide with the time-table of the Institute. The enterprises decided to drop the persons they needed so that the rules be kept. Such a reversal of objective is acceptable when rules become important by themselves instead of being a means to achieving a defined goal.

In brief, the viability of the public sector enterprise (also true for other organisations) is dependent upon the development of an administrative organisation suited to the achievement of the purpose for which the enterprise is set up. Failure in this critical aspect has threatened the purpose of the public sector; e.g., rapid economic growth by public control of basic industry.

There are two separate yet related problem areas in public sector enterprises needing urgent attention:

**T**he need for clarification of the role of the concerned administrative ministry; and the development of an appropriate administrative organisation from within.

Several public sector units have been under constant criticism by Parliament and the public. Perhaps much of the criticism has been valid; invariably the target of criticism is the chief executive. Such public attacks are often petrifying not only to the person concerned, but to others in like positions and are a hindrance to effective action.

On important issues such as labour-management relations, or

purchasing of equipment, the critics sometimes pressurise the administrative ministry to take action against a person. Although these measures seem to produce expected results for a short time, they create bottlenecks for the enterprise in the long run. Under pressure and censure most people function at a level below their normal capability; to handle a crisis situation competently, the concerned persons must be in full command of all their capabilities. This means that their self-confidence must be uninjured.

**W**hen I was making a study of the operations during the Bihar famine of 1967, a senior officer in government made a significant point. Without making a close study, he said, newspapers had been publishing disparaging remarks about the arrangements made by the State Government. It was freely surmised that the administration was corrupt and inefficient and could never handle the situation. Government employees, said the senior officer, had not only to fight the famine situation and preserve human life through devastating circumstances, but also bolster the self-confidence of those who were doing field work. The success of the administration would depend upon the efficacy of the administration, he added, but even more on the self-confidence of the thousands struggling to save human lives. This was seen by the interviewer as a major task, at the time, for the administrators. Many senior officers went on field visits to meet the district people to boost their self-worth—an effort which becomes necessary in times of crisis. Military leaders know how important it is to preserve the self-confidence of their men. So does the political leader in his campaign.

In a U.S. case study the economy drives in two companies are described. In one company the president instructed the

employees to effect every possible economy in order to survive through the next year. He banned recruitment, new activities and all new expenditure.

In the other company, the president explained the tight economic situation and requested the departments to get together with their operating people to work out concrete plans to effect the greatest possible savings.

In the first company people went round switching off lights and fans and did not recruit even those persons who could have helped to pull the company out of adversity. It suffered a more severe set-back at the end of the year. The second company was able to pull itself up by its boot-straps and make a recovery.

Persons with kindly, helpful, or zealous intentions from within or outside the government and the Parliament, have, to recognise what social impact their criticism would make on people in organisations and whether the criticism would support their intentions or negate them.

The agencies from within the Government, the Bureau of Public Enterprises, the Public Accounts Committee, the administrative ministries, find mechanical solutions that are inadequate to human problems. As Roethlisberger has pointed out, human problems need an understanding of both the human situation and the forces operating in that situation.

The administrative ministry has to perform the gate-keeping role by which the enterprise management can be relatively free to carry out work without constant disturbance from external bodies.

**I** have discussed elsewhere that in industry three identifiable tasks exist (Brown, 1960). These

are entrepreneurial, directional and employment tasks. The first is concerned with the determination of boundaries for what is, and what is not, permitted to be done; with capital formation, return on capital, product innovation on diversification. The second prescribes the objectives to be achieved, the allocation of resources needed to achieve them, formulation of policies within which the work will be carried out. The third relates to the exercising of individual skills for specified work.

Elsewhere I have discussed that the government can carry out entrepreneurial tasks more effectively than the directional and employment tasks (Dayal, 1970). This entrepreneurial role, however, requires a clarification of relationships between the administrative and other ministries in the government. It is a role that can be effectively played only by the administrative ministry and not several ministries together as an abstract body.

It is the administrative ministry that has to set up the appropriate organisation to perform the entrepreneurial role basically consisting of:

- a) Investment decisions for carrying out specified activities, growth and diversification.
- b) Appointment of the Board members and the chief executive most suitable for the job required to be done.
- c) Setting up specific long and short term goals for achievement by the concerned units and identification of relevant data to ensure that the performance of the unit is adequate.

Briefly, it has to perform a gate-keeping task and an entrepreneurial role. It has to ensure that the management of the public sector can function under reasonable conditions of stability and that the controls exercised are effective enough for obtain-

ing satisfactory results from the management.

In the second problem area that I have specified, these aspects of the administrative organisation in the present situation are most important:

- i. Suitability of the organisational design, administrative practices and management control system for the particular technology and for the achievement of the objectives.
- ii. Consistent with (i) above, development of the policies and administrative practices suitable for the system, and relevant training in supervisory and management roles.
- iii. Development of a viable base of interpersonal relationships within the organisation and with the unions.
- iv. Management aids most suitable to the technology such as operations research, long range planning, market intelligence and the like for decision making.

The effectiveness of an organisational design depends upon the nature of work (technology) and the distribution of authority and power, the instituting of controls consistent with the internal demands of the task, and a sentient system for the emotional ties of the many different groups working in the organisation. The administrative practices and the leadership should be consistent with the requirements of the task. The organisation and administration of research would be different from that of manufacturing; a textile mill different from technology-based industry (such as electronics).

Systematic research studies have provided useful knowledge about authority and power, how they are acquired by people in organisations and how they contribute towards, or detract from, the development of viable organisations. Authority is an attri-

bute of the work. It has to be legitimised at the terminal points in the work organisation where it is needed. Power is an attribute of the individuals and groups. The concept of power explains how pressure groups, cliques, intergroup conflicts etc., develop in work situations.

Many research findings help us understand how certain controls induce defensive behaviour, or the 'playing of games' among individuals in certain situations often defeating the central purpose of the controls. Recent studies by Woodward and her colleagues at the Imperial College, London (1970) have pointed out certain different types of controls that are induced by different technologies and how they influence the control systems that are functional to each.

Authority and power are dynamic concepts; they must contribute to, not detract from, the pursuit of organisational goals. In the operating system, organisational practices should develop relationships that are consistent with authority and power at levels where these are needed or where they contribute to the health of the system.

A strategy for developing a viable organisation includes four things:

(a) A chief executive who has a vision of growth and the ability to accept the realities of the situation however painful: this includes willingness to share his authority and power with other people in the organisation.

(b) For effective development, the management's perspectives of growth must necessarily encompass the total enterprise, and not individual activities (De, 1971; Dayal, 1971). Often the management calls in consultants for help in certain factors such as management development programmes, evaluation of training needs and control systems. Help is meaningful provided these issues form a part

of the development plans of the total enterprise. I doubt if improvements in an isolated practice or any one activity would make sufficient impact on the overall performance of the enterprise (Dalton, 1970; Griener, 1970). I believe these requests often represent either poor diagnosis of the situation, or an effort to find easy, if inadequate, solutions urged partly by 'let us do something'.

(c) The problem areas should be recognised and accepted as important by the persons who are responsible for taking action for solutions. A noted psychologist, Kurt Lewin (1957) has argued that successful change essentially requires three stages: (i) a stage of defreezing where the people have to unlearn some habitual ways of doing things, (ii) a stage of recognising and learning new ways of doing things, (iii) a stage for re-freezing the new ways of doing work, or internalisation, i.e., people absorb the new ways and make these a routine part of their normal work. It is only at this stage that a change is institutionalised.

The process of change always requires changes in the system, in ways of doing work, in behaviour in the relationships at superior, peer and subordinate levels (Lawrence, 1960). The active involvement of the people in the organisation with the process of change, therefore, assumes top priority in the change process. The common practice of appointing committees of enquiry, or review committees, may serve the purpose of finding out what *might* be wrong with the enterprise but is unlikely to bring about a change within the organisation (Beckhard, 1970; Dayal, 1969). The appointment of committees for improving public sector enterprises is generally a futile exercise towards little more than satisfying the administrative ministry that something has been done to set things right, while, in reality, they have merely deferred action. It would

be interesting to follow through the results of the reports made by the committees appointed to look into some of the enterprises and to evaluate how much they helped towards achieving enterprise goals.

**F**ormulation of developmental strategy requires a deep understanding of the tasks and of the particular organisational processes that induce power, authority, intergroup conflicts and patterns that interfere with the achievement of the defined objectives. Specialists with this kind of knowledge are needed for the appraisal of organisational problems and for developing concrete plans of action. They may be obtained either from within the enterprise or from outside. For developmental work experience alone is not an adequate substitute for specialised knowledge of organisation behaviour.

Briefly, the essential requirements of making public enterprises viable are the following:

- (a) The management should be involved in the identification of problems and in remedial action.
- (b) The management's commitment should be the development of the total enterprise and not any single aspect of its activity.
- (c) As the development process is slow and prolonged, the commitment of the total management should be sought and not only the chief executive's.
- (d) The administrative ministry must define its own role vis-a-vis other ministries and the enterprise and provide controls and services that support the enterprise tasks and not hinder them.

A programme for development and growth requires specialist knowledge for analysis of the enterprise situation and for deciding on a strategy of deve-

lopment. The experience of most organisation in the U.S. as in India, suggests that help from specialists is necessary. Large enterprises should have a team of their own organisational specialists for systematic analysis and development or compulsorily seek help from outside agencies.

In recent years some enterprises have been asked by the Bureau of Public Enterprises to engage outside consultants either for study of some specific aspects or several inter-related problems. In most cases the enterprise management appears to undertake such projects because they want to oblige the Bureau, whereas the initiation of a project, and the responsibility for its execution, should be the internal management's.

**T**hus the three steps for developing enterprises in the public sector are:

(a) Appointment of a chief executive who is able to provide the type of leadership a particular industry may need. It has to be a long term appointment, not for two or three-year periods as in the civil service. The enterprise management should enjoy stability and continuity of leadership. The efficient should get encouragement and the inefficient, be removed.

(b) The administrative ministry should create an organisation within itself to perform the entrepreneurial role. It should clearly specify what it expects from the particular enterprise and evolve systems of control and review of overall performance of the enterprise.

(c) The Board of the enterprise should be required to undertake review of its management systems, identification of its problems and a systematic plan of action. They must appoint specialists either from within or from outside to help the management develop viable systems of work.

In the first part of the paper the common characteristics of

management systems in Indian industry are discussed. These features are equally valid for both public and private sector organisations. Some additional factors common to public enterprises are: (a) legal-rational or bureaucratic systems of work organisation, (b) role bound interpersonal relationships and (c) inadequate management control systems.

The growing knowledge about strategy for development and growth of an enterprise suggests that the effort should involve the total enterprise and not be confined to a few activities. The improvement in performance essentially requires working on several key areas of its task simultaneously, and according to clearly defined problems and plans that lend themselves to concrete measures of achievement. The people concerned should be involved in diagnosis, planning and in taking actions. The involvement of people is required both in improving systems of work and in learning new ways of relating to superiors, peers and subordinates. The experience of companies in the West, and of some in India, is that specialists are needed for diagnosis of problems and planning for action in development work.

Lastly it is suggested that two problem areas for intensive work are necessary: (A) Relating to the definition of the role of the administrative ministry, and (B) Relating to the development of the enterprise system from within. The ministry should be equipped to perform the entrepreneurial role as defined here and perform the gate-keeping function to preserve the organisation from undue pressures by external forces.

From within, the enterprise has to develop an appropriate organisational design and administrative practices and to institute management aids that improve decision making.

## Law & justice

L. M. SINGHVI

THE Constitution of India appears to have travelled far in a short span of time, from a state of brooding and olympian omnipresence in the sky to a noisy and congested market place. Many of its liberal assumptions are questioned. Some of the fundamental postulates of the constitutional fabric are under fire. Emotive pressures for extensive and radical changes are aggressive and articulate. Legislative temper appears to be not only impatient but also some-



what intolerant of judicial review. Mutual mistrust and misgivings between the judiciary on the one hand and the executive and the legislature on the other have brought about a critical confrontation which strains the system continuously.

There are many who sense in this intense politicisation of constitutional questions the potentials of danger and destruction for the future of our Constitution. There are others who feel that the current developments were inevitable and may well lead to a greater resilience and realism in our legal system and political processes, increasing their capacity and thrust for social justice and economic development.

One is prone to trace the origins of the constitutional confrontation to the decision of the Supreme Court in *I. C. Golak Nath's case* (27th February, 1967) in which the court held that Parliament had no power to amend or curtail Fundamental Rights embodied in Part III of the Constitution. A closer analysis would indicate that the roots of the conflict lay deeper in certain political developments and in socio-economic causes. Institutional alienation and the attitude of conflict and confrontation began with a sense of frustration and disillusionment with the system as a whole. Political uncertainty and instability unhinged the levers of power from traditional moorings and compelled the quest for a new and more radical identity.

To begin with, the debate on the Supreme Court decision in the *Golak Nath case* was largely academic and juristic. Nath Pai's bill, which was intended to overcome the effect of the judgment of the Supreme Court and to declare that Parliament had power to amend Part III of the Constitution was discussed in a leisurely fashion by Parliament and provided an intellectual occasion for the assertion of Jeffersonian democratic philo-

sophy. The split in the Congress Party catapulted the economic programmes and ideological differences to the forefront.

The successive judgments of the Supreme Court in the *Bank Nationalisation case* and the *Privy Purse case* imparted a sharper edge to the controversy which was soon to acquire the dimensions of a dominant political issue. Came the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and the general elections which gave Mrs. Indira Gandhi an overwhelming majority. Winds of judicial interpretation sowed in the *Golak Nath case* were now to reap whirlwinds of legislative amendments. In a fundamental sense, these amendments are symptomatic of a deepening disenchantment with, and alienation from, the postulates of our liberal Constitution although, perhaps, in the absence of these judicial decisions the executive initiative and legislative response might have been more moderate.

The Supreme Court was sharply divided in the *Golak Nath decision* which, in turn, proved to be deeply divisive. The litigation which culminated in that fateful decision was singularly barren. *Golak Nath's* petition was dismissed. The *Punjab Security of Land Tenures Act (1953)* which was impugned and under which an area of 418 standard acres and 9½ units was declared surplus in the hands of the descendants of Henry Golak Nath, continued to be operative even after the judgment of the Supreme Court. The validity of all the constitutional amendments enacted hitherto and taking away or abridging fundamental rights, including the Seventeenth Constitutional Amendment, which was the main target of attack in the *Golak Nath case*, remained unaffected and untouched by the *Golak Nath decision*.

Five Judges of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Subba Rao held in the *Golak Nath case* that a constitutional

amendment is 'law' within the meaning of Article 13 of the Constitution and, therefore, if it takes away or abridges the rights conferred by Part III of the Constitution, it is void. The Court also held that the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951, Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act, 1955 and the Constitution (Seventeenth Amendment) Act, 1964 violated and abridged the Fundamental Rights. They ruled, however, that on the application of the doctrine of 'prospective overruling' the said amendments would continue to be valid. At the same time, they declared that the Parliament would have no power from the date of that decision to curtail any of the provisions of the Fundamental Rights enshrined in Part III of the Constitution.

In short, the doctrine of 'prospective overruling' was pressed into service to nullify the conclusion of invalidity in respect of the First, Fourth and Seventeenth Amendments of the Constitution. Justice Hidayatullah, whose partial concurrence with the five judges led by Chief Justice Subba Rao tilted the balance, held that the Fundamental Rights were outside the amendatory process if the amendment sought to abridge or take away any of the rights, although, at the same time, he ruled that the First, Fourth and Seventeenth Amendments being part of the Constitution by acquiescence for a long time could not be challenged. He held that Fundamental Rights could not be abridged or taken away by the exercise of the amendatory process in Article 368, and any further inroad into these rights as they existed on the 27th February, 1967, would be illegal and unconstitutional unless it complied with Part III in general and Article 13(2) in particular.

He also suggested, and in making this suggestion none of the other judges had agreed with him, that for abridging or

taking away Fundamental Rights, a Constituent body would have to be convoked. The Golak Nath decision by a majority of six to five was thus meant only to put the Parliament on notice that the Supreme Court would not countenance any further amendatory inroads into the rights embodied in Part III of the Constitution.

**T**here was no majority for the doctrine of prospective overruling. The doctrine of acquiescence had a solitary exponent in Justice Hidayatullah. The Court was unanimous in dismissing the petition of L. C. Golak Nath. The Amendments of the Constitution made under Article 368 remained a part of the Constitution and the legislation protected or permitted by those amendments was not invalidated. Nor does the decision apply to any legislation that may be enacted under the authority of the constitutional amendments passed before the decision in the case of L. C. Golak Nath. The Golak Nath decision was therefore no more than a kind of a contraceptive pill for future constitutional amendments seeking to curtail Fundamental Rights. A devastating controversy developed because the Parliament was not willing to swallow the pill.

The debate on the Golak Nath decision was confined initially to the philosophical premises and first principles of constitutional jurisprudence broadly in Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian dichotomies. The late Nath Pai, who promptly sponsored a Constitutional Amendment Bill in Parliament, was anxious to restore the power of amending the Constitution as embodied in Article 368. Speaking at a Convention on the Constitution (August, 1967) convoked by the Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies in collaboration with other national institutions, Nath Pai said that the Supreme Court had tried to amend the Constitution and he was only trying to restitute the

Constitution as it was given to us by those who framed it.

He argued that by its judgment in the case of Golak Nath, the Constitution was unilaterally changed by one of the co-ordinating organs of the State of India, the Supreme Court, whose functions are well defined in the Constitution'. He said 'My submission is that Parliament is supreme in the field of legislation and the Supreme Court is supreme in the field of interpretation'. He hastened to add that if the amendment sponsored by him were to be struck down by the Supreme Court, he would bow down to that authority because he did not want to interfere with the independence of the judiciary.

The opposition to the doctrine of amendability of Part III of the Constitution arose partly from the feeling that the amending power had been used indiscriminately and in a cavalier manner. The quality and content of constitutional amendments led many to welcome the warning contained in the judgment of the Supreme Court. It was argued by them that Part III represented a constitutional settlement which could not be a plaything of transient party majorities. Others argued that the fundamental rights were therefore immutable and transcendental and beyond the ordinary amending procedure.

**T**hus, those who apprehended executive and legislative inroads undermining the sacrosanctity of fundamental rights sympathised with the majority view of the Supreme Court and the role of the judiciary as a sentinel on the outposts of liberty. On the other hand, there was a sizeable body of opinion among jurists, scholars, administrators and statesmen who thought that an unamendable constitution was a contradiction in terms, a veritable anachronism. They argued that no contrivance of human wisdom could be eternal and inviolate and that the constitutional system

was not a fossil but an ever-growing plant.

To put it in the words of Thomas Jefferson: 'Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. . . Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of human mind. . . We might as well require a man to wear the coat that fitted him as a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regime of their ancestors.'

**N**ath Pai's Bill gathered a lively debate around it, but the process of adopting the Bill went through leisurely buffeting and oscillation in Parliament. There was at that time little evidence of any particular sense of urgency regarding the passage of the Bill, although there was an increasing awareness of the issues involved. The loaded initiative for surmounting the effect of the declaration, embodied in the decision of the Supreme Court in the Golak Nath case, gathered inexorable momentum only after the decisions of the Supreme Court in what have come to be known as the Bank Nationalisation Case and the Privy Purse case and more so in the wake of the momentous split in the Congress Party which resulted in the sharpening of political polemics and ideological formulations.

The stage for the Twenty-fourth, Twentyfifth and Twenty-sixth Amendments was thus set in a swiftly changing political context which culminated in the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and the holding of the General Elections. Unprecedented political pressures for social and political changes in the country were built up during this period

See, 'Fundamental Rights and Constitutional Amendment', General Editor: Dr. L. M. Singhvi, National Publishers 1971. p. 178.

of ferment and, suddenly, the proponents of moderation and gradualism found themselves isolated with a decisive shift towards constitutional radicalism.

If the Golak Nath decision triggered a lively debate, the successive decisions of the Supreme Court in the two cases of Bank Nationalisation and Privy Purse provided the immediate springboard for parliamentary retaliation and remedial action. The decision of the Supreme Court in the Bank Nationalisation case laid down that the Parliament could not so legislate as to authorise the acquisition of private undertakings without full compensation. In this, the Supreme Court did not perhaps take into consideration the Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Bill which precluded a scrutiny by Courts on the adequacy of compensation. The decision also overlooked the implications of the decision of the Supreme Court in *Shanti Lal Mangal Das* case in which the Court had ruled that in view of the Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Bill, it was not open to the Courts to go into the question of quantum of compensation except when the principles for awarding compensation were irrelevant or when the compensation proposed to be paid was illusory.

The decision of the Supreme Court in the Bank Nationalisation case was, for the time being, accepted by the executive and the legislative organs, and was given due effect by enacting a fresh piece of legislation validating the takeover and providing for full payment of compensation. The decision foreshadowed the possibility of a recurring judicial veto on social and economic measures.

While the executive was smarting under the blow of the Supreme Court decision in the Bank Nationalisation case and it rankled in the legislative

heart, the government was once again beleaguered by the decision of the Supreme Court in the Privy Purse case striking down the 'midnight order' of derecognition of the rulers. The government had lost its Constitution Amendment Bill for the abolition of Privy Purses in the Rajya Sabha by a fraction of a vote and resorted to the device of issuing an executive order to achieve the object which it had intended to achieve by the still-born constitutional amendment.

In quashing the orders of derecognition, the Supreme Court had in essence questioned the power of the executive to undo or efface certain provisions of the Constitution. But, in a country like ours where the executive is a part of the legislature and where the legislature is led by the executive, the setback suffered by the government in the Privy Purse case appeared to them to be the proverbial last straw on the camel's back.

These decisions, however, provided only the proximate cause for the three most far-reaching constitutional measures, the Twentyfourth, Twentyfifth and Twentysixth constitutional amendments. The milieu in which these measures came to life was simmering with demands for far-reaching changes in the social and economic order. The popular impulses for change came to be canalised into these constitutional measures which served as a focal point for a fresh affirmation of socio-economic objectives. The decisions of the Supreme Court came in as a convenient alibi and the constitutional amendments were placed in the forefront of the newly elected Parliament as redeeming the electoral pledges and as a stepping stone for a 'socialist' programme of action.

The main questions raised by these three constitutional amendments relate to the amendability and limitation of Fundamental Rights, the Right to Property and the scope of judi-

cial review in our constitutional system. The Twentyfourth Amendment seeks to overcome the declarations made by the majority in the Golak Nath case. It also takes away the power of the President to withhold his assent once a constitutional amendment is passed under Article 368. Nor does it stipulate the ratification of constitutional amendments affecting Fundamental Rights by State Legislatures.

The Twentyfourth Constitutional Amendment is meant to be a declaration and a parliamentary re-statement of the law relating to the power and procedure of constitutional amendments. It is not itself beyond the pale of justiciability, but it is clearly a rejoinder and a counter-notice by Parliament to the Supreme Court. The crucial question is whether the Supreme Court would, when the question of the validity of the Twentyfourth Amendment is raised before it, strike it down as being violative of the dictum in the Golak Nath decision or it would revise its position by rendering that judgment inoperative or by over-ruling it.

There is no doubt that the situation is explosive on the one hand and embarrassing on the other. If the Court is to act under open parliamentary pressure brought to bear upon it by the Twentyfourth Amendment and retreats to the position obtaining before the Golak Nath decision, its authority and its credibility might suffer. If the Court strikes down the twenty-fourth amendment, it might plunge itself into a convulsive vortex of confrontation and controversy with the Parliament and with the government which commands a massive majority in the House of the People. It would be difficult, though not impossible, to work out judicious and sagacious solutions which would preserve the authority and the credibility of the Court and at the same time

avert a critical confrontation and headlong collision.

The Twentyfifth Amendment touches not only the Right to Property but also certain other Fundamental Rights. What is more, a legislative declaration that a given enactment has been passed in pursuance of Article 39 of the Constitution, makes it conclusive and puts it largely beyond judicial review. The objection to the Twentyfifth amendment is not only that it takes away the power of the judiciary to scrutinise the quantum of compensation or the principle on which it is awarded, but also that it protects such legislation from a scrutiny by Courts of law on the basis of Article 14 which guarantees equality before law and equal protection of laws, and Article 19 which guarantees our seven fundamental freedoms.

The twentyfifth amendment would thus have not only the effect of severely limiting the right to property but also that of putting other Fundamental Rights, particularly those enshrined in Articles 14 and 19 into a strait-jacket. Apart from the fundamental questions relating to the place of the right to property in a liberal constitutional system and the ramifications of limiting the right to property in terms of democratic institutions and processes, the burning question is whether other Fundamental Rights should also be placed outside the custody and protection of the Courts.

There are many who feel that Fundamental Rights need not and should not be denuded in order to effectuate the Directive Principles of State Policy which can be harmonised with fundamental rights. If that is so, it may well be that the sweep of the three constitutional amendments is much wider than the real requirements of the situation. A developing nation needs accelerated pace without impediments but it must also strive for

the fundamental protection of the rights of the individual.

The Indian Constitution provides for constitutional remedies before the High Court as well as the Supreme Court. The remedial right in respect of Fundamental Rights enshrined in Part III of the Constitution is itself a guaranteed right. The scope and efficacy of the remedies before the Courts will inevitably suffer as a result of these amendments. Psychologically and institutionally, too, there would be a recession in the sphere of judicial powers. As a result, personal freedoms and individual liberty might receive a setback. It would be claimed that the removal of judicial hazards would obviate delays and quicken the pace of the implementation of socio-economic legislation geared to effectuate the Directive Principles of State Policy. The claim is open to question and remains, in any event, to be proved.

It would be sad and ironical, however, if we fail to achieve an accelerated pace of socio-economic progress while at the same time losing the liberal protection of Fundamental Rights. The major question with which the Indian polity and constitutional system would have to come to grips with is the question of judicial review and its scope, which is also the question of the relationship between Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. Linked with this is the question of evolving alternative inbuilt procedures of administrative justice for checking abuse of power and of discretion and for a system designed to overcome executive and administrative arbitrariness. Social justice is and should be an article of faith with us. But social justice must go hand in hand with freedom and liberty. It is in the quest of a constitutional reconciliation of socio-economic justice and individual liberty that we seem to be groping.

# Jobs and education

VINA MAZUMDAR

'In spite of three five-year plans, the education imparted in our universities and colleges has not been purposeful, productive and employment oriented. The planning system has been completely defective.'

(Report of the Conference of Student Representatives, 1969.)

'There is great wastage in all forms of education; . . . given modernization and development as goals the wrong types of abi-

lities and the wrong attitudes are imparted or preserved.' (Gunnar Myrdal: *Asian Drama*: Vol. III Page, 1535)

**T**he lack of relation, or co-ordination, between employment and education has dogged India since the beginning of the educational revolution in the nineteenth century. Then it was caused by a dichotomy between the intentions of the planners and controllers of the educational system, and the causes of the social demand for modern or 'English' education.

The government's intention was limited—to produce a class of English-speaking Indians, who would serve as subordinate members in the administration, support British rule, and consume British products. There was no intention of using education as an instrument of social or economic change. The privilege was meant for the upper classes, and any demand for enlightenment or modernisation through a policy of mass education was invariably met with the theory of 'infiltration'.

The social demand was for education in the 'useful sciences' which could bring about a socio-economic transformation of decadent Indian society. Men like Isvarchandra Vidyasagar, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Jagannath Shunkershetth and Asutosh Mookerjee, dreamt of a policy to awaken the creative energies of the Indian masses, and recognised that nothing but the vernacular media could achieve this.

But, the government persisted with its policy of elitism and 'anglicism', the prior claims of science and usefulness being replaced, under the subtle guidance of Macaulay and his successors, by the claims of the English language and literature.

But, all efforts to restrict education to a small elite failed to arrest the social urge. The pressure of numbers, in the context of inadequate teaching resources

and obstinate refusal of the planners to relate education to socio-economic needs, led inevitably to the second characteristic of Indian education—excessive provision of liberal arts because it was cheap, and neglect of scientific, technological and vocational education. Pleas for greater diversification, and vocationalization of school education, voiced by government commissions or by public opinion, ended in futility.

The spectre of educated unemployment began to haunt the champions of the British Raj long before the establishment of the Indian National Congress, but since expansion of education was left primarily in the hands of the private sector, the explosion continued, with renewed vigour after the establishment of the universities in 1857, and was responsible for the third feature of the Indian educational system—a top-heavy structure, with weak foundations and an over-extended upper storey.

**I**n spite of repeated policy statements by the government regarding the need to develop primary education at a much faster rate, and a continuous pressure from nationalist organisations for compulsory primary education, this lopsided development continued throughout the period before independence.

The Report on Post-War Educational Development (Central Advisory Board of Education, 1944) criticised Indian universities for their 'failure to relate their activities sufficiently closely to the practical needs of the community as a whole.' Following the Report of the Sapru Committee (1935), which attempted to investigate the extent of unemployment among graduates, one or two universities had set up Appointment Boards, but no systematic effort was made 'to adjust their output to the capacity of the employment market to absorb it'. According to the CABE's esti-

mate, only 30 per cent of university products were employed 'in keeping with their attainments or commensurate with the time and money which have been spent on their education.' Of the remaining 70 per cent, 50 per cent were under (or unsuitably) employed, while 20 per cent were completely unemployed. In spite of this overproduction, the universities were not producing 'either in quantity or quality the leaders and experts in all phases of national life.'

**T**he optimism of the first years after independence blamed the pre-independence government for bad planning, restricted objectives and niggardly investment in education. A number of Commissions recommended increase in investment, expansion and re-organisation of the system at different levels. Boards of Secondary Education replaced university control over school curricula and examinations; the Higher Secondary and Three Year Degree Courses appeared to replace the Matriculation, Intermediate and Bachelor courses; special investment was made in technical and medical education, establishing some pace-setting, high-standard training centres with foreign assistance; generations of neglect of science education was compensated by giving unquestioned priority to the expansion and development of science education; and specialised agencies like the University Grants Commission, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Indian Council of Medical Research, National Council of Educational Research and Training were created to provide assistance, guidance and coordination in development of education and research at different levels.

Expenditure on education went up steadily, as the table below will indicate.

As Amartya Sen says, 'governmental neglect' is not a

feature of present Indian education. And if achievement is to be measured by numbers, then that record too is impressive.

In spite of this achievement, the Education Commission, surveying the total scene in 1964-66, observed that the system had failed to serve the needs of the nation, because it was not related to either productivity, or the social and political goals of modernisation, social justice, secularism and democracy. Nor had it succeeded in keeping pace with the rapid advance in human knowledge, and the gap between international and Indian academic standards was widening. The education system had failed to meet the economic, social or academic needs of the nation.

Among the many criticisms levelled by the Commission against the system, the following are particularly relevant for this paper.

a. The slow pace of progress in fulfilling the constitu-

tional directive—to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years. This was to have been achieved by 1960, but in the Commission's estimate may only be achieved in some places

- such as urban areas or advanced States, by 1975-76;
- b. Poor quality, stagnation and wastage at different stages in primary education;
- c. Unplanned provision of secondary education without reference to need for trained manpower; and the absence of adequate provision for vocational education and work-experience at each stage. The Commission recommended a policy of regulated and selective admissions, with the aim of diverting 20 per cent of students at the lower secondary stage and 50 per cent at the higher secondary stage into vocational training.
- d. The Commission was emphatic that the pace of expansion in all sectors of higher education had been too rapid, outstripping the facilities available in real terms, and had affected standards adversely. Overproduction in many spheres, particularly in the arts and commerce, while there is a continued shortage of professional specialists in other subjects, is the inevitable result of allowing this ex-

TABLE 1  
Total Educational Expenditure in India (1950-51 to 1965-66)

	1950-51	1955-56	1960-61	1965-66 estimated
1. Total educational expenditure from all sources (Rupees in millions)	1,444	1,897	3,444	6,000
2. Index of Growth	100	166	301	524
3. Educational expenditure per capita (Rupees)	3.2	4.8	7.8	12.1
4. Index of Growth	100	150	244	378
5. Total national income (at current prices) (Rs. in millions)	95,300	99,800	141,400	210,000
6. Index of Growth	100	105	148	220
7. National Income per capita (at current prices) (Rs.)	266.5	255.0	325.7	424.4
8. Index of growth	100	96	122	159
9. Total educational expenditure as percentage of national income	1.2	1.9	2.4	2.9
10. Index of Growth	100	158	200	242
11. Average annual rate of growth of total educational expenditure	First Plan 10.6%	Second Plan 12.7%	Third Plan 11.8%	All three Plans 11.7%

TABLE 2

Enrolment in 000s at different levels of education

Level	1950-51	1955-56	1960-61	1965-66	1970-71 (estimated)
Primary (Classes I—IV)	13,651 (4.9)	17,380 (7.5)	24,996 (8.2)	37,090 (8.1)	61,297 (5.5)
Middle (Classes V—VII)	3,228 (7.6)	4,592 (10.2)	7,462 (11.0)	12,549 (11.1)	21,218 (8.8)
Secondary (Classes VII—X)	1,508 (9.5)	2,371 (9.2)	3,682 (10.7)	6,127 (7.5)	8,818 (7.5)
Higher Secondary (Classes XI—XII)	282 (12.2)	502 (11.1)	849 (10.5)	1,398 (8.3)	2,087 (7.5)
Under-graduate (Arts, Science & Commerce)	191	322	434	759	
Post-Graduate (M.A., M.Sc. & Research)	18	28	51	86	
Professional (Under-graduate & Post-Graduate)	54	89	160	149	
Total in Higher Education	263	439	645	1,094	2,250* (Approx)

\*This is my estimate. The figure was 2.20 lakh in 1968-69. All other figures in these tables are taken from the Report of the Indian Education Commission. Figures in parentheses indicate annual growth rate.

pansion to be 'dictated, not so much by the enrolment capacity of the institutions concerned or the employment opportunities available, but by pressures of public demand which have increased immensely'.

Among the reasons listed by the Commission for this increased demand, the following deserve particular attention.

- i. The traditional social status attached to a university degree.
- ii. The increased education hunger of the urban middle classes.
- iii. The desire of the rural and lower classes for social advancement.
- iv. The absence of adequate employment opportunities for young persons, which forces them to take up higher education because they have nothing else to do.
- v. A rapid multiplication of colleges and universities making them easily accessible to students in thousands of small out-of-the-way places.

Anticipating an increase of this pressure in the future, the Commission emphasised the need for a relative deceleration of the rate of expansion of higher education through a policy of 'selective admissions'. The conditions guiding such admissions should be the resource-capacity of the institutions, the merit of the students, and the anticipated requirements for trained manpower in different sectors of society.

The Commission based its recommended pattern of enrolment upto 1985-86 on estimates of manpower requirement prepared by the Indian Statistical Institute and the London School of Economics in collaboration with the Planning Commission, but stressed the need for further and continuous studies in

this field, in view of the general lack of precision, and details in such studies. In spite of the limitations of existing data and techniques of forecasting, 'estimated manpower needs provide four broad indications in terms of magnitudes, e.g., the total enrolments needed in secondary and higher education; enrolments needed in different types of courses; shortage and surpluses in the manpower situation; and priorities involved.' (E.C.R.—Page 92).

Since the publication of the Commission's Report, this necessity has been emphasised by a number of conferences, of Vice-Chancellor's, students and other members of the academic community. Practically every Committee appointed by the U.G.C. to advise on policies for development has emphasised the need for better manpower estimates and relating these to enrolment and development of higher education. A Panel set up by the U.G.C. in 1965 recommended that existing resources of the universities should be used to collect data on employment opportunities and job requirements to provide more dependable information for preparing manpower estimates. It also advised greater liaison between universities and employing agencies, e.g., the State governments and industry, through inclusion of the latter's representatives on Boards of Studies, university planning bodies and on committees to channelise employment information to students, as possible ways to improve the co-ordination between university education and manpower requirements.

The Panel visualised that research on employment and manpower requirements should become an essential function of the universities to be coordinated at the national level. The results of such studies, and the improved liaison with government and industry, would be reflected both in enrolment and curricula, enabling the univer-

sities to meet the charges of providing courses unrelated to economic needs and of not providing training in the actual skills required by different types of jobs.

Successive committees of the U.G.C. have reiterated these recommendations, and all such recommendations have been passed on to the universities and State governments, but have produced little response. Enrolments, expansion of colleges and universities, opening of new departments, still continue to be governed primarily by the strength of the local demand. In the meantime, unemployment has raised its ugly head even in the sacred and privileged sectors of engineering and medical studies and student pressure has led to a policy of reducing enrolment in some professional institutions, even at the cost of lowering the utilisation of teaching capacity. After generations of clamour for more and more science graduates, when the proportion of science graduates has nearly equalled the arts ones, they are left equally unemployed.

Amartya Sen claims that all manpower estimates prepared by governmental agencies, including the ISI-LSE one, tend to show an upward bias and overestimate the prospects of economic growth. They use arbitrary norms, e.g., one doctor for every 3,500 persons, which the government's recruitment policy is unable to match. He criticises their techniques as 'inefficient and antiquated.' But, the tragedy is that even such crude or exaggerated estimates are not as yet considered by most of the universities, or educational planning agencies, in determining their policies.

The crisis, therefore, is due neither to governmental neglect nor to lack of advice on ways to combat it in future. Sen traces the cause to a dichotomy between the social and private profitability of education. Social profitability, viz., growth of



productivity, particularly in the agricultural sector, organising capacity, and politicisation which would increase the total volume of power within the society, all point to the need for a much greater effort to expand elementary education, a comparative effort to expand, improve and diversify secondary education, and restriction of the quantitative expansion of higher education. Instead, effort should be concentrated on diversifying university education to provide a variety of training, giving priority to neglected, or short-supply skills and on improvement of quality.

Private profitability, on the other hand, intensifies the demand for higher education.

'When a certain profession is overcrowded the gain for the society in training another man in that field may be a little and may well be outweighed by the costs involved. The calculations for the private individual is, however, rather different. If he goes through the course, he may still be better off after all this than he would have been had he never taken the course at all. By offering himself in the market with this training, he will of course reduce the possibility of someone else getting the job; his educational decision incorporates this prospect of displacing another person.'

Secondly, since higher education is heavily subsidized, the individual 'bears only a small part of the society's cost in educating him.' Lastly, the lack of jobs reduces the prospects of sacrifice of immediate earning power. Such 'rational economic considerations', as also the social value and prestige attached to degrees, are behind the pressure.

The over-expansion of higher education has been a substantial reason for the inadequacy of resources at the inadequacy of elementary and secondary educa-

tion, since the educational budget is limited. The cost of producing one M.A. equals that of schooling 41 primary students, one M.Sc. student costs India 89 primary students in equivalent terms. But fantastically enough, in India we expand much faster at the costly rather than at the cheaper level of education. Between 1960-61 and 68-69, while primary enrolment rose by 60 per cent, that in universities and colleges rose by 128 per cent.

'To put it provocatively, the right to higher education is the right of the educationally privileged to study further at the expense of the society irrespective of one's academic abilities, and it is a right that is exercised by throwing children out of schools.'

Sen joins the Education Commission and J. P. Naik in recognising this demand as essentially a middle-class one—'But given the nature of Indian politics today, all political parties, including those of the Left, have been inclined to champion middle class causes.' The all-parties Parliamentary Committee of 1967 disagreed with the Education Commission's recommendation regarding selective admissions. The statement of the National Policy on Education issued by the Government of India in July 1968 emphasises its determination to transform the system 'to relate it more closely to the life of the people', but the phrases 'employment opportunities' or 'manpower requirements' are conspicuous by their absence. The entire statement reflects the spirit of the Parliamentary Committee's belief 'that every effort should be made to provide admissions to institutions of higher education to all eligible students who desire to study further.'

One cannot but agree with Sen that the political leadership has failed to withstand the pressures that spring from private profitability, and has been sacri-

ficing social profitability in the process.

This is, however, only one dimension of the problem. The leadership may have erred in its ordering of priorities in the allocation of resources, but the entire failure of our education to link itself to national requirements cannot be laid at the leaders' doors. What contribution has the academic profession or the industrial and business sectors which absorb the products of the educational system, made to qualitative changes in the contents and methods of education, which seem to be essential to redress the balance between over-production of unwanted men, and under-production of particular skills that are wanted to improve national productivity? How many universities have taken any steps to change their curricula and methods of teaching to relate them to national needs, the running theme of the Report of the Education Commission?

How many institutions have cared to consider the advice of the expert committees sent to them as suggestions, or even bothered to pass them on to the teachers, who constitute after all, the field-staff of this army? It is fairly well-known in academic circles that communications of this nature generally end their travels in university offices, and seldom reach the teachers. Nor are they to be found in the libraries. What then is the value, or effectivity, of such advice? Sen advocates more efficient techniques for forecasting manpower requirements. Would that necessarily guarantee their producing an impact on university planning and enrolment? On the other hand, the use of ultra-sophisticated, techniques may widen the 'credibility gap' between planners at the national level and policy makers at the institutional level.

Our basic problem is the failure of communicating sound ideas worked out by expert

bodies (the U.G.C. which has developed a remarkably efficient system of brain-picking, has produced an incredible amount of such workable ideas) to the men on the field. There is a difference in levels and dimensions of understanding of the issues involved. It is difficult for the men in distant institutions, surrounded by pressures from the local milieu and confined in their academic thinking by years of routine teaching of the same courses, to understand the national significance of the suggestions that emanate from Delhi. Any imagination of initiative that they possessed in their youth has been pulverized long ago by the hierarchy that still dominates our educational institutions. Imagination, dynamism, and the desire to translate new ideas into workable experiments are rare virtues in university, college and departmental administrations, but status and power consciousness are conspicuous by their abundance.

These have created, over generations, a laissez-faire attitude among teachers, and status-quoism among administrators, which defeat most attempts to bring about changes in curricula, methods of teaching or examinations, composition of academic bodies, or relations with society outside the university. It is permissible for the governing bodies of colleges and university senates and syndicates to contain government officers, politicians and other non-academic men, but not to invite industrialists, production experts or other job-givers to advise on courses that may equip our students better for new types of jobs that could open up if trained men were available to fill them. Nor is it permissible to invite them to teach some of the subjects for which their work-experience qualifies them.

Since educational policy, planning, economics, politics or sociology are not included in any of the university courses (except teachers training, and

that is not in a form to make any serious impact. I must of course exempt a few pace-setting institutions like the Delhi School of Economics from this charge!), the libraries of universities and colleges contain little literature on such subjects, and the ignorance among members of the academic profession of developments in these fields is abysmal. University administrations which form the vital link in the channel of communication between State and national planning agencies and the educational field staff have done nothing to remove this. Instead, they often deliberately mislead their teaching staff by building up an image of these bodies as all powerful institutions which control and prevent initiative on the part of institutions. I have met many teachers who genuinely believe that the U.G.C. 'would not permit' changes in the regulations for admissions, examinations or research!

The statutory powers of the U.G.C. include 'coordination' in the national interest. But the Commission has been extremely reluctant to exercise this power, because a cardinal article of its faith is defence of the autonomy of universities, in the sacred spheres of admissions, curriculum designing, examinations and recruitment of staff.\* But totally unstatutory bodies like the Coordination Committee of Vice-Chancellors of different universities in each State on the other hand have not hesitated to exercise their power in a negative manner. It is now usual in State universities to find hold-ups in needed changes, because the Coordination Committee has not achieved unanimity.

In the last few years, there has been some talk of the need for 'orientation' of teachers in colleges and universities. Under pressure from the U.G.C., a few universities have organised some training programmes. If these programmes help to introduce teachers to the new dimensions of the educational revolution taking place in different parts

of the world through the development of the communication and social sciences, acquaint them with the real character and extent of the educational problem in India, and the forlorn efforts of small bands of 'committed men' to take arms against this sea of troubles, then they may improve the prospects of needed reforms.

As for the job-makers, they appear to be unaware of any special responsibility to improve the supply of skills wanted by them. Indian industry has so far made little contribution to the development of specialized training needed by its staff to meet the needs of expansion and development. How many of the jobs advertised in the Indian press carry details of job-requirements? How many endowments has industry created for teaching particular subjects? As for the government; any demand for new skills in the administration generally results in the setting up of inadequately equipped training centres. It seldom occurs to them that the training could be arranged at far less cost in the universities. Such demands would give the universities a greater sense of social purpose, because the task of training existing decision-makers would certainly provide a greater challenge than the abstract goal of training the potential decision-makers of tomorrow.

Experts on programmed learning say that the first important instrument for education is clarity of objectives. The Education Commission, and the National Policy Statement are both emphatic that the most important objective now should be 'to relate education to the life and aspirations of the people.' How should educators achieve this goal of relevance?

The courses in most Indian universities and secondary

\*In UGC parlance, the Commission may 'suggest', 'recommend' or 'invite the attention' of universities to needed reforms, but never 'direct'.

schools still display an over-theoretical bias, and an absence of content which would be familiar to the experience of most students. For instance, most of the social science courses contain very little Indian content. A wider knowledge of the world is good, but knowledge as a skill can only be acquired if one starts from what one has experienced and proceeds step by step, to analysis, conceptualization and assimilation. Our courses mostly emphasise what Dewey called 'knowledge about', and not 'knowledge of acquaintance'.

**T**he distance between the learner and what he learns is so great, that only exceptional students can manage to make the leap in their imagination. The cultivation of this imagination, from which alone can come the ability to relate apparently different things to each other, is not one of the goals pursued in the class-rooms. On the other hand, the different subjects remain isolated from each other. There is no incentive to relate them, and far less to relate what one is learning inside the class to one's social experience outside the class.

To give a few examples, a large number of students now come from rural areas. Schools and even colleges have now appeared in such places, but there is little or no attempt to relate the instruction programme to rural life or to programmes of rural development. A visiting committee to colleges in Rajasthan reported that a large number of students in these rural colleges wanted training in agricultural sciences, since they had land which they wanted to develop. Instead, they were forced into arts and commerce subjects which left them thoroughly bored. Similar comments have come from other committees which visited colleges in other States. The Conference of Students Representatives (1969) recommended 'a proper scheme of diversified, job-oriented courses', and exami-

nations to test 'the understanding, interpretation, application and ability to solve problems.'

The net result of this lack of relation is the stultification of what might have developed into initiative, or creative energy. Incidentally, boredom leads to indiscipline and is a major reason for much of the difficulties now affecting teaching and examinations. Thirdly, this starts a subtle process of deculturation, turning a substantial number of rural students into a faceless mass—young men with uncultivated minds and urban desires but no urban skills or attitudes to compete with the more privileged urban students. M. N. Srinivas thinks this is a major cause behind the present student tensions.

Loss of roots in village society, coupled with the lack of mental skills, prevent development of initiative, and encourage too much dependence on leaders. Unfortunately, competent leaders are not always around.

**A** large number of urban students face similar problems. Educational institutions avoid involvement with problems of city life and no incentive is provided for development of intellectual or social skills. Many social workers report that the so called 'anti-social' elements among the urban youth do in fact nurse a tremendous hunger for involvement in solving social problems, and when properly harnessed can make great sacrifices for such causes. Here, again, is a waste of creative energy for lack of proper training in skills and ideas.

Gunnar Myrdal says education in South Asia has failed because it inculcates an aversion to manual labour. I think this point has been overstated by foreign observers. Our education does not 'teach' this aversion. It is already there in our society but mainly in the upper classes. Student attitudes are changing fast, with changes in their composition.

The large numbers who do not come from a socially privileged background do not have this aversion. A substantial section of even the privileged ones quite enjoy the rare opportunities of 'doing things'. What is missing is the imagination that can direct creative energy, the daring to start off ventures on one's own initiative, the courage and the knowledge that suggest branching off from conventional occupations.

**J**obs do not fall from heaven, nor can they be created by planners or by government effort alone. Larger mass initiative, as well as physical resources, are necessary to widen employment opportunities. Resources may be made more accessible by government decision, but the task of releasing this mass energy, through development of skills, ideas and information, basically a communication problem, rests on the educational system, and the men who work it. Job-orientation of course alone will not help if these vital factors are missing. The unemployed in India include many trained in vocational courses.

The Union Ministry of Labour has been trying to provide some employment information and guidance to university students through the bureaus established by the Ministry in some universities. An U.G.C. Panel, and the Students Conference (1969) made extensive suggestions for improving the working of these bureaus, and for integrating their work into the academic life of the universities. Both emphasised the need to establish liaison between universities and employing agencies, 'primarily with a view to informing the students regarding job opportunities and acquainting industry with the kind of students being trained in the universities.' Following these recommendations, the Directorate General of Employment and Training drew up a scheme to extend and improve the organisation of the bureaus with help from the U.G.C. I am not aware if the

programme has been implemented so far.

The crisis in our education is the result of the clash between social need, and the failure of the middle classes (of which the academic profession form a substantial part) to realise its social significance. A system designed for and manned by an elite, cannot expect to perpetuate itself at the cost of social profitability, when the social system itself is being transformed by the entry of new classes into the political process. Any analysis, whether done from a purely economic, social, political or academic point of view, points to the answers. We must speed up the pace of expansion at the elementary level, and fulfill the constitutional directive to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of fourteen. We must also step up the efforts to remove illiteracy by an intensive programme of adult education.

We must stop the expansion of higher education, and instead concentrate our resources on improvement, diversification and qualitative changes. And we must mount a massive propaganda, to bring the academic community of teachers, students and administrators to a realisation of its social responsibility. If the system cannot adapt itself to changing social conditions, if it goes on perpetuating social wastage at the cost of society, then it will collapse through internal disintegration.

Many academics have a tendency to look upon the present problems of teaching and examination as the fault of the students and the political parties which instigate them for their own ends. The perpetual strikes, clashes and closures, the 'mal-practice' in examinations, the increasing use of violence in student protests, all features of the current 'student unrest', are often seen as *external* forces arraigned against the educational system. It would be wiser to recognise them as signs of *internal* disintegration. If edu-

cation is neither interesting nor a guarantee for employment, then why should students enjoy spending the best years of their lives in that process? If teachers cannot make the effort to make the learning process intellectually stimulating, or conducive to making the students socially and individually useful, then why should they expect respect from students or society?

The role of the planners is the most frustrating one in this tangle. To spend months, or years in studying a problem, to devise ways of combating, or solving it, and then to find their schemes turning into bits of unwanted paper, of interest only to occasional researchers (mostly foreign ones, at that!) in educational planning, is an unenviable experience. Deprived of the sense of achievement through successful goal-attainment, many of them lose their bright-eyed optimism in cynicism, and their committed involvement in red-tape.

Ever since independence, we have been experiencing a clash between the liberal and the socialist traditions, both of which played a part in the freedom movement. Like other parts of our social life, the educational system is a victim of this clash. The dependence on State subsidy, and the limitations of having to function within a State or national framework make our educational establishment closer in nature to a socialist system. There is really very little autonomy in the true sense, nor has the system contributed to the development of academic freedom, and equality of scholars, basic values for the liberal tradition. Faced by political pressures, the State never hesitates to interfere in the educational sector. But, reluctance to be branded as socialists and the remnants of some attachment to liberal traditions prevent it from accepting the responsibility for directing and controlling the system. The result is a policy of drift—in response to the wind from

whichever direction it might be blowing—from powerful pressure groups or classes, to students and teacher factions.

And, yet, how to meet the costs of a radical reorganisation and change of policy? The students representatives recommended compulsory drafting of all students into the army. Why not ask them, instead, to agree to a 'draft' for the spread of literacy and primary education and other nationally necessary programmes as payment to society for higher education which they have already received, or are going to receive? At present, few universities regard the spread of education among non-students as their responsibility. If a spell of school-teaching could be built into the students' academic programme as 'work-experience', there would be no dearth of teachers for elementary education. Similarly, budding doctors could be made to look after the health of some villages as a part of their training.

The periods must be long enough to make some real dent on the student's mind, not short spells of 'national service' scattered during his academic career. Instead of taking his degree in four, five or six years, a student would spend two years longer in the process. Instead of sitting unemployed after taking his degree, he would be employed for a substantial period during his studies. Apart from meeting his social obligation to some extent, I feel that such field experience would make him a better student. The sandwich courses, alternating class-work with field experience, now being tried in some technological institutions could be extended to other subjects. They would certainly help our studies to be less academic, more practice oriented, and help to free students from their present state of mental dependence; developing more creative energy, drive and initiative, which are essential for raising national productivity, and for generating employment.

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## DEFENCE

### (A Nuclear India?)

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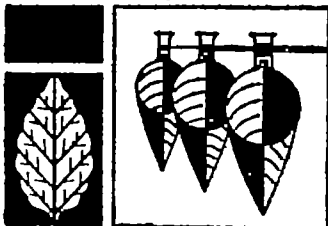
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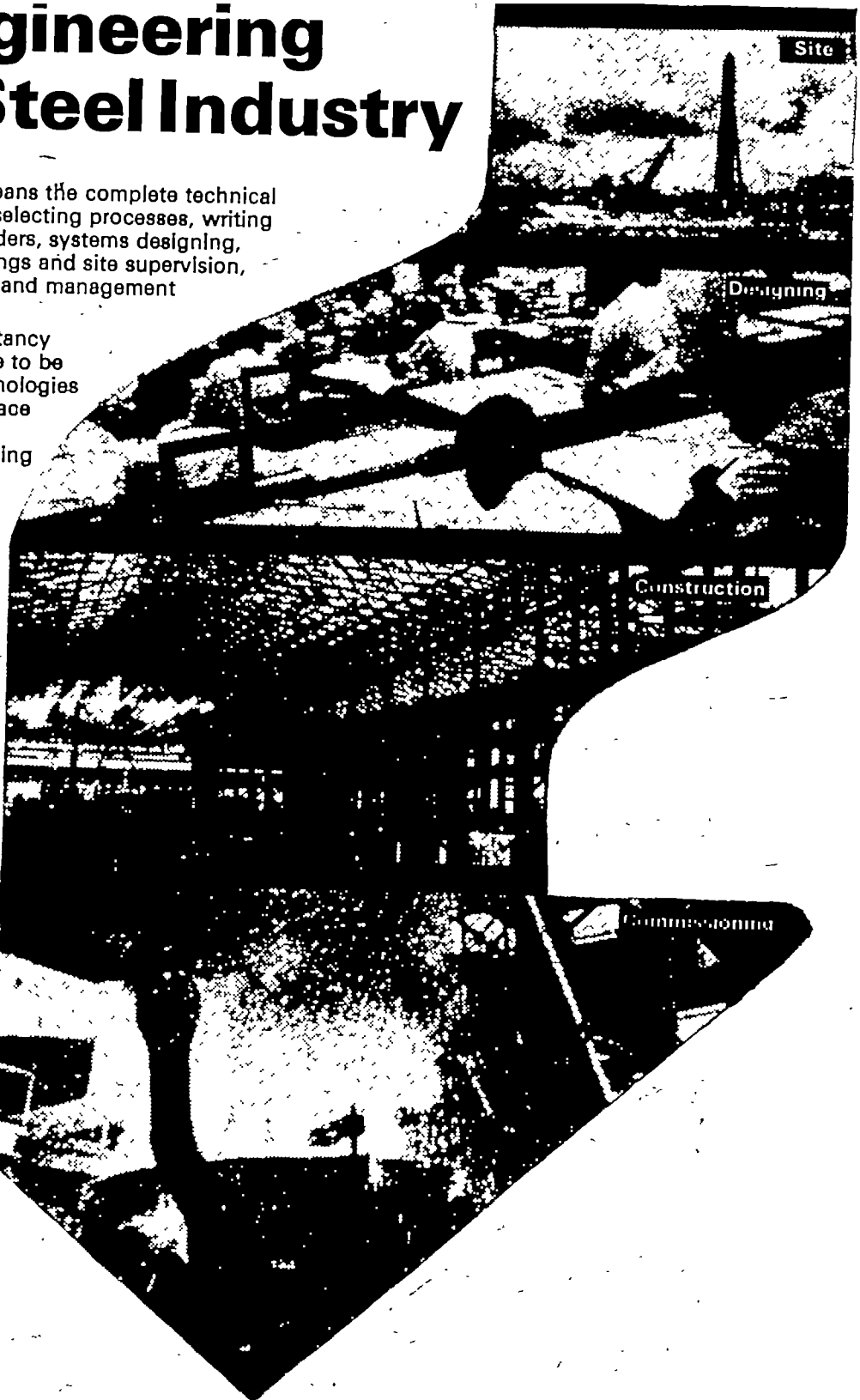
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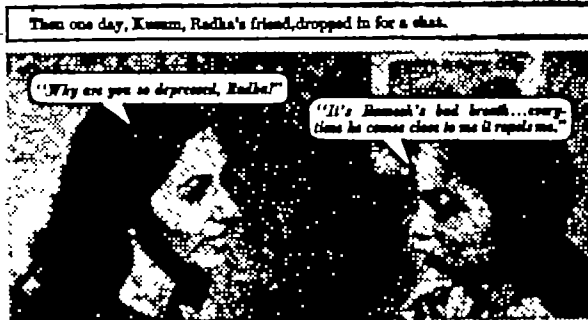
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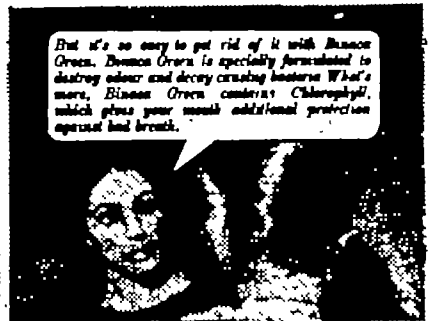
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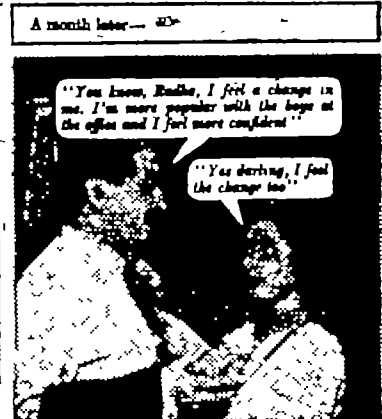


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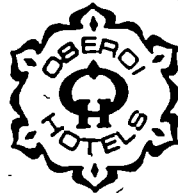


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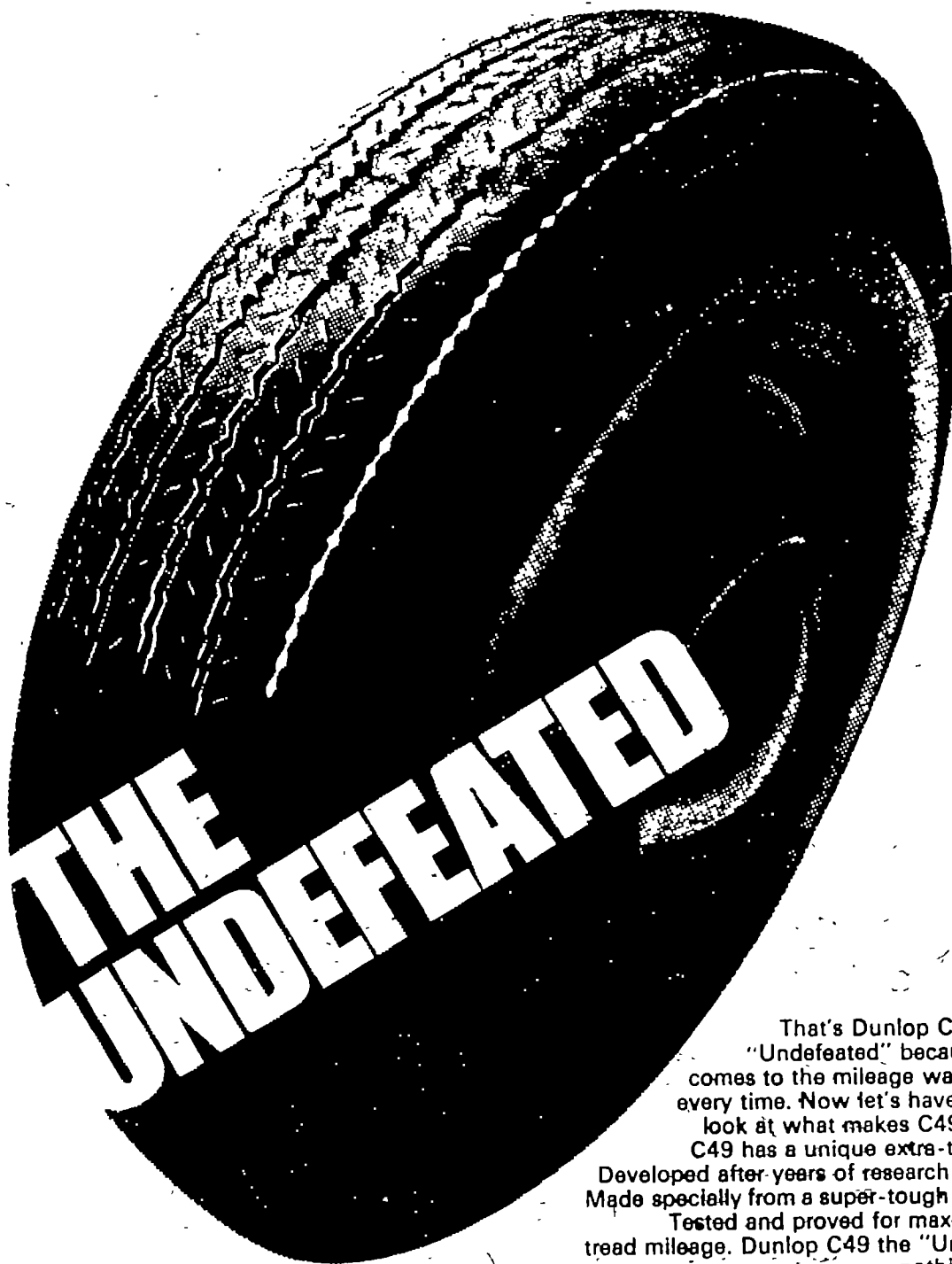


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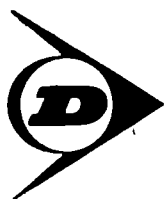
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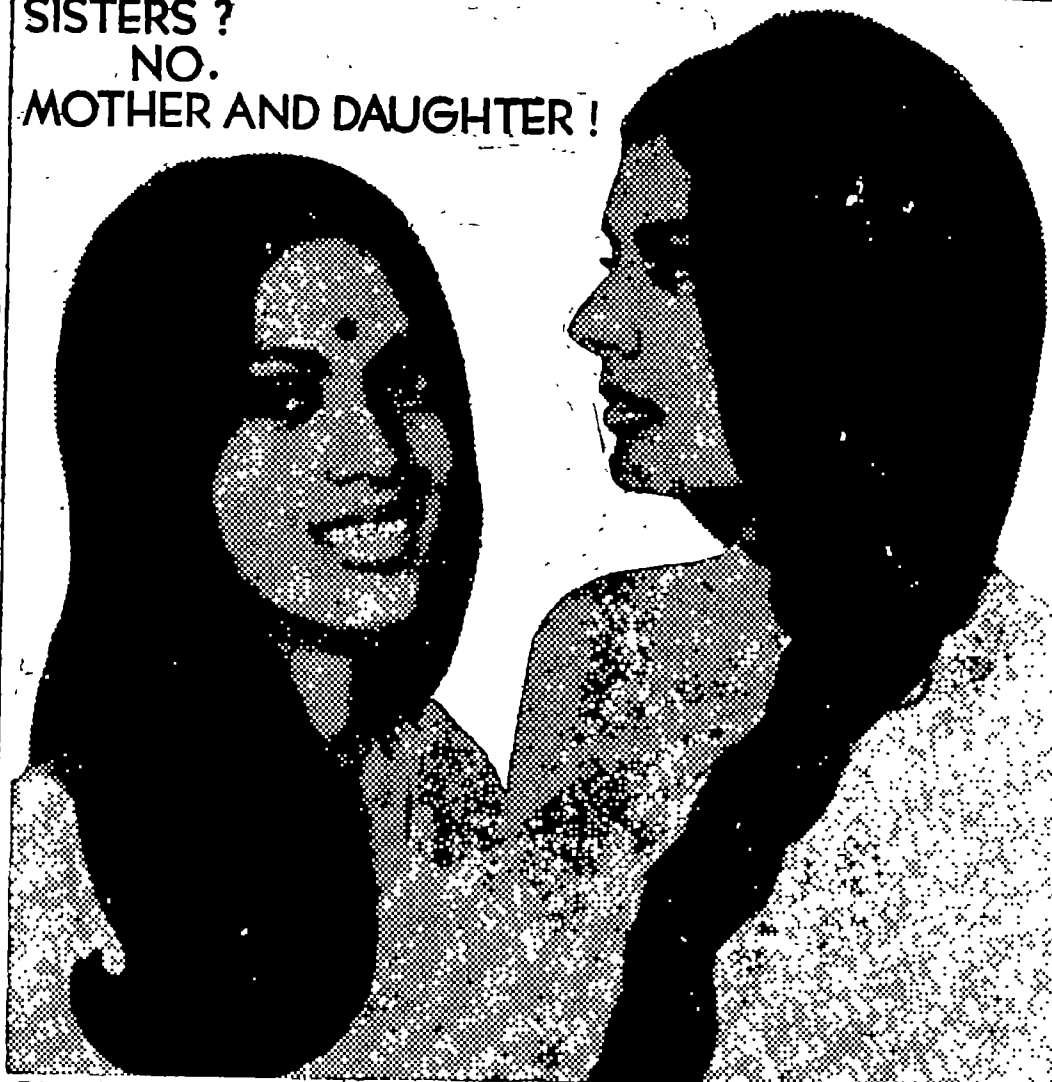
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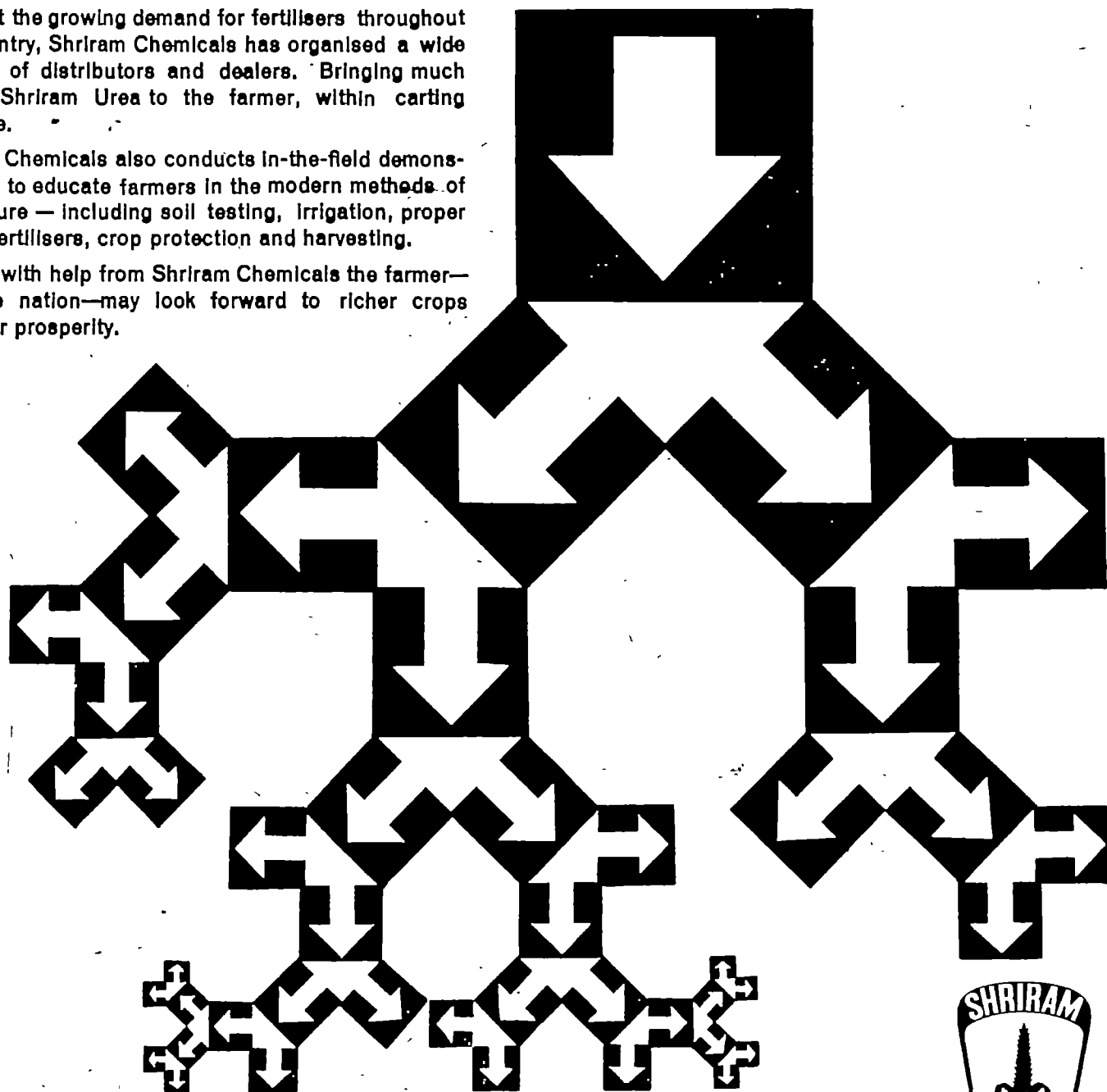
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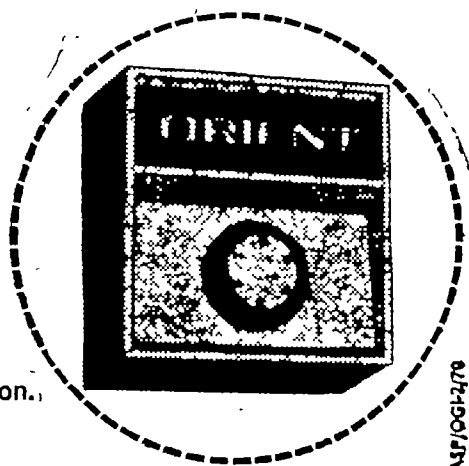


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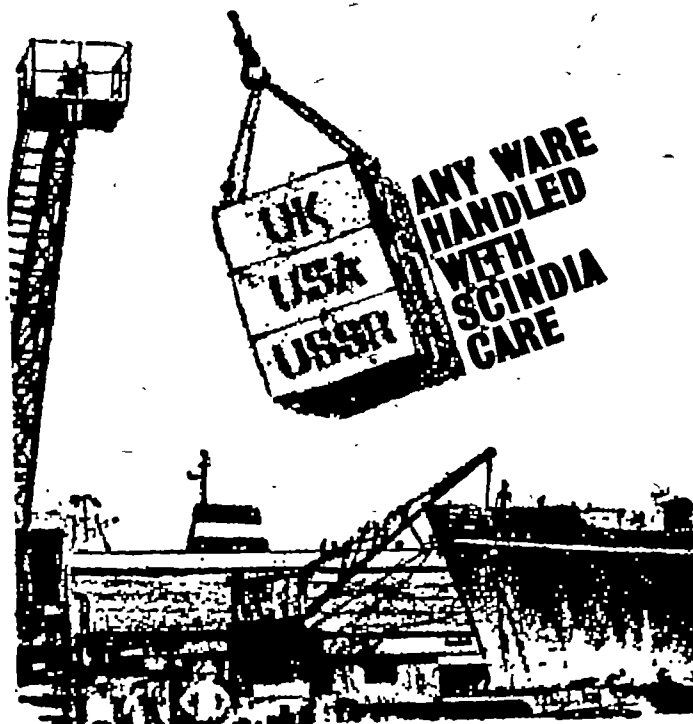
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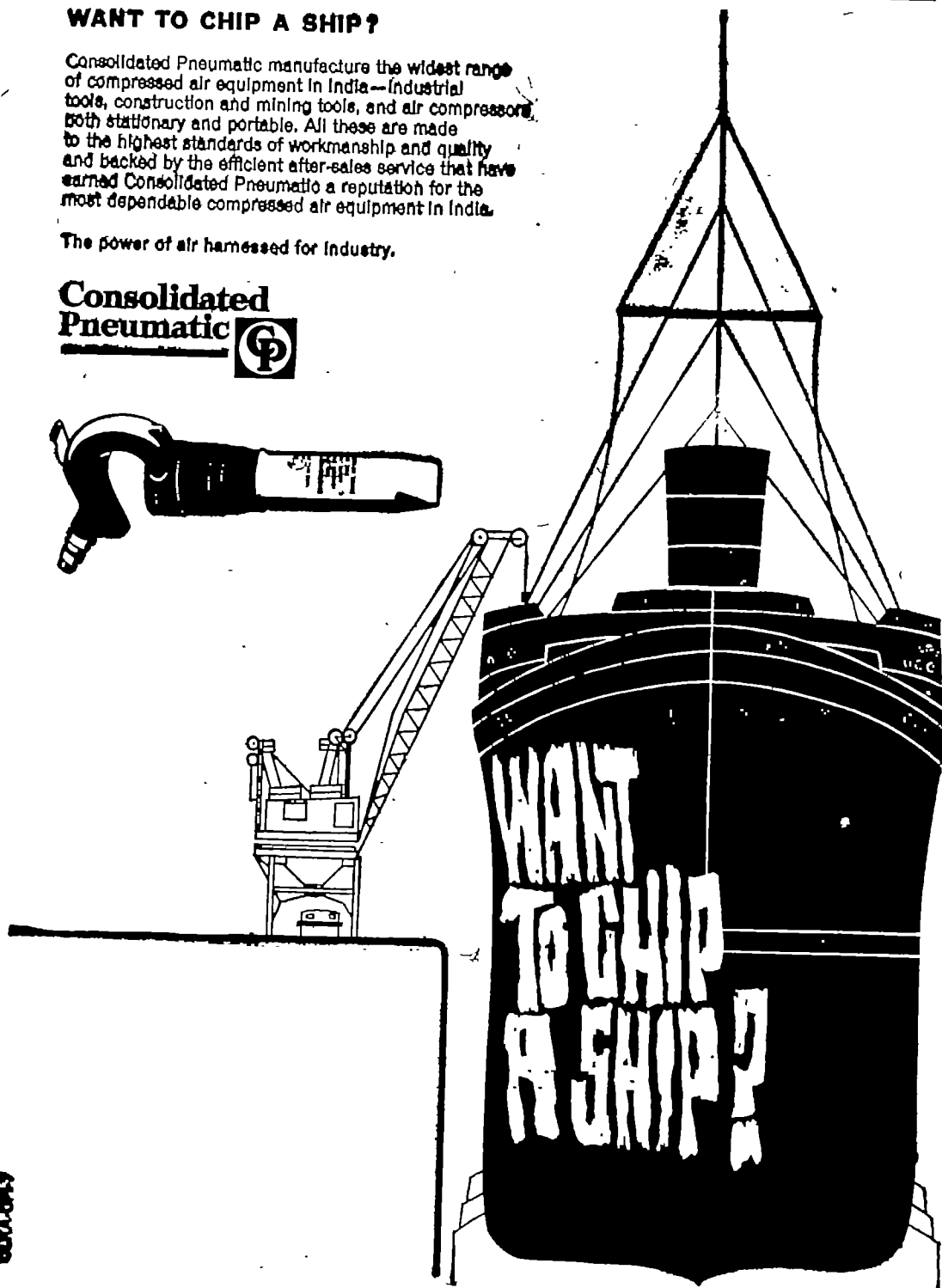
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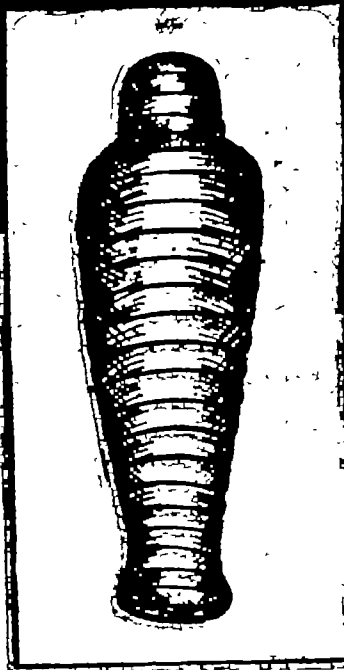
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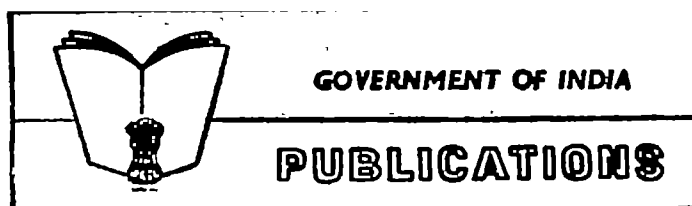
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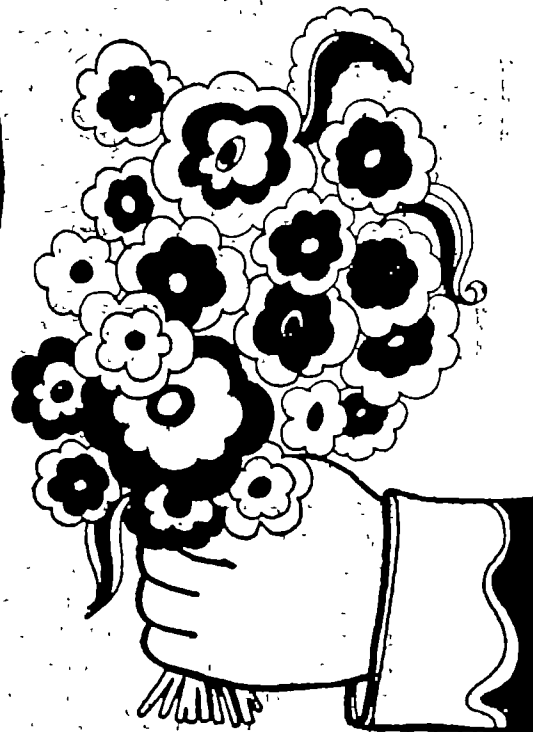
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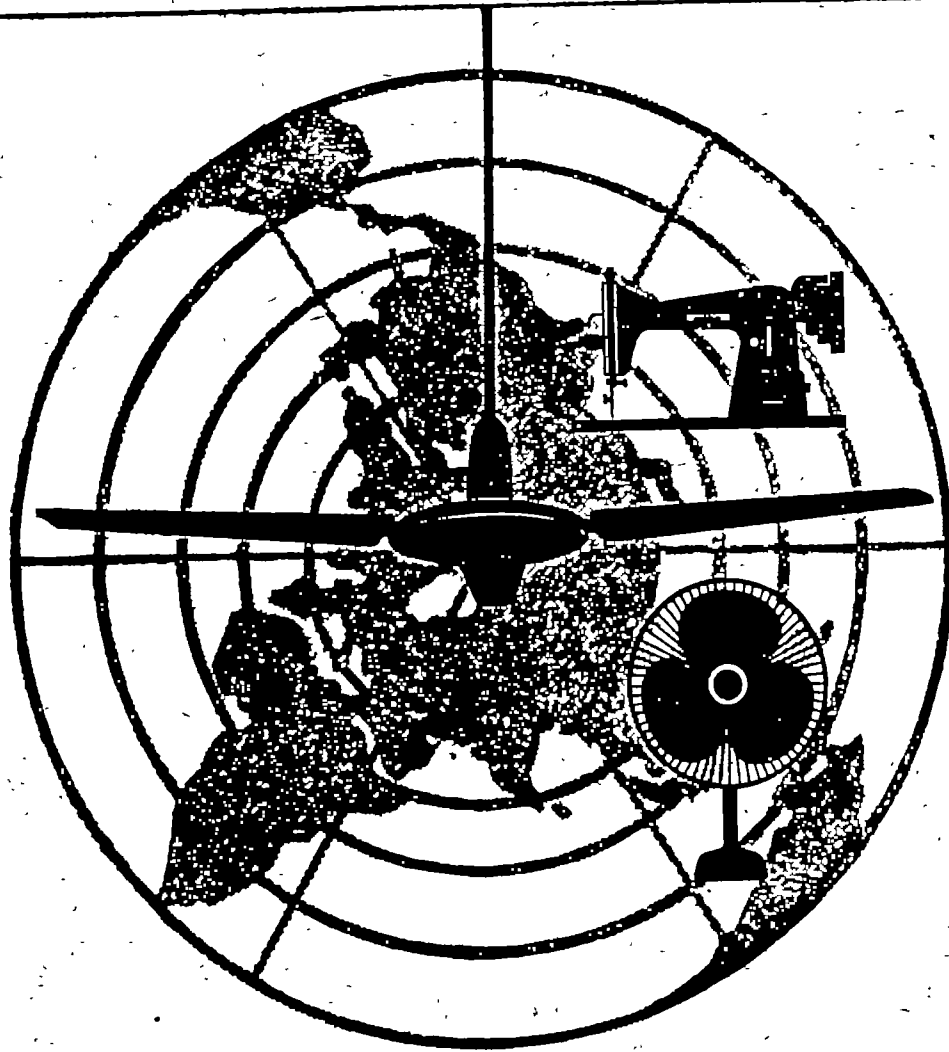


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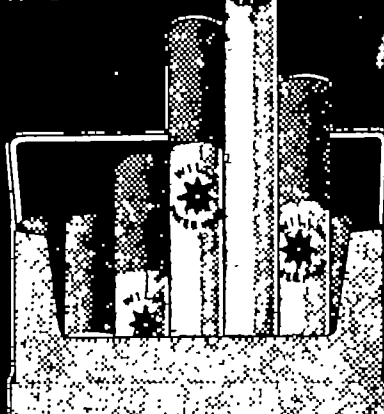
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NEXT MONTH : SECRET SOCIETIES

# 150

## IMPACT OF BANGLA DESH

a symposium on  
some repercussions of  
a major event

symposium participants

### THE PROBLEM

A short statement on  
the issues involved

### PAKISTAN'S DILEMMAS

Shir Gupta, Professor of Diplomacy,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

### PSYCHOLOGICAL REPERCUSSIONS

Imtiaz Ahmad, ICSSR Research Fellow,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

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### COVER

Designed by Dillip Chowdhury

## The problem

The rise of an independent Bangla Desh, a nation of some 75 million people, is an event which will have wide repercussions at several levels — particularly on the thinking patterns of the sub-continent of India, on the regional balance of power in South Asia and on international politics. In addition, the possible impact on the sub-continent's economic growth has still to be assessed, as also on the defence budgets which eat up so much of the surplus available for development in our part of the world. The break-up of a *status quo* made to serve the interests of major powers and those who continue to hold sizeable overseas investments is bound to lead to the crystallisation of new trends. Some will revolutionise. Others will seek to calm the turbulence. The new friendship between India and Bangla Desh, if properly consolidated, will become a major factor in the unfolding situation. Of course, this is easier said than done. All the political creativity we possess will be required to command the necessary follow up. We begin the quest for this creativity with this issue.

# Pakistan's dilemmas

SISIR GUPTA

12

THE traumatic experience of the military defeat at the hands of the allied forces of India and Bangla Desh is bound to create convulsions in the society of

West Pakistan. It has been no ordinary defeat. Pakistan is not the only country which has lost a large chunk of territory at the end of a short war but what

is unique is that it can put forward no legitimate claim to the lost province. Nor can they ever hope to regain it by force.

Equally, the whole character and structure of the Pakistani State has become very different at the end of the 14-day war in the sub-continent. Further, that Pakistan should have suffered such ignominious defeat at the hands of a country which was for long described as weak, unstable and inefficient is a matter of great psychological strain for a people who have been brought up on a very different set of images of India and of themselves. One can feel certain that all these facts are bound to affect the future course of developments in West Pakistan, although it may be too early to speculate on how exactly things are going to take shape in that country.

It is possible to exaggerate the significance of what has happened already. Bhutto has replaced the discredited military leaders and has announced his intention to transform Pakistani society. Certain apparently radical measures have also been announced. Similar gimmicks were taken recourse to by earlier dictators in Pakistan. One has only to remember the first year of President Ayub's rule in Pakistan to be aware of the fact that such measures taken in the wake of a *coup d'etat* do not often provide a clue to what the dictator is ultimately determined to achieve. It was not long ago that Colonel Gaddafi of Libya was hailed as a great radical reformer. By now the world knows the limits under which he operates and the self-imposed ideological compulsions which he respects.

On the other hand, there are cases in history when leaders came to power without any definite or clear programme and purpose but lived on to provide a stable and meaningful government to his people. One can easily mention the case of

Charles de Gaulle to illustrate the point. Therefore, one has to view developments in West Pakistan with an open mind and watch the progress of Bhutto carefully before rushing to the conclusion either that he is going to be successful in tackling the problems of West Pakistan or that he is bound to fail.

Bhutto faces great dilemmas in the spheres of both domestic and foreign policies. Before analysing the nature of his dilemmas, it may be worth while to point out that what most Indians regard as Pakistan's acutest problem is in fact a problem of manageable proportions. There has been far too much of emphasis in our discussions on the fissiparous tendencies within West Pakistan. It is true that the smaller nationalities in that country were not always happy with the dispensations that obtained in Islamabad. The Baluchis, the Sindhis and the Pathans are, in that order, having their own valid reasons for questioning the wisdom of belonging to a united Pakistan.

It will not be easy for anyone completely to integrate all these peoples into a monolithic Pakistani nation. But the problems of integration of Pakistan are by no means greater than those faced by other developing countries, including India. In fact, in many ways Pakistan has an advantage over others like it in sustaining its unity. All the languages of Pakistan are written in the same script; Urdu is understood, though not spoken, in almost all parts of Pakistan; the Pathans have been well accommodated in at least one pillar of the power structure, namely, the armed forces; the Sindhis and the Baluchis are marginal peoples; and, finally, Punjab is the Prussia of Pakistan.

The problems of all these nationalities are different from those of the Bengalis. No con-

ceivable political structure in Pakistan could have solved the problems of the unity of East and West Pakistan. On the other hand, the problems of disunity in West Pakistan can become unmanageable only if there is no viable political structure in that society. So long as Bangla Desh was a part of Pakistan, the central problem of Pakistani politics was the unity of the two wings. If that could be solved, a viable political structure could have emerged.

Now that Bangla Desh is lost, the central problem of Pakistani politics is the erection of a viable political structure. After that is solved, the problems of unity will look much less formidable than they do today. It is only in the event of a total failure of Pakistan to evolve a political structure that the problem of fissiparous tendencies may assume unmanageable proportions.

Let us then turn to the real problems of Bhutto. Because his rise to power is directly attributable to a major external reverse of Pakistan, it is inevitable that his main concern for some time to come will be to readjust Pakistan's external posture to the changed situation.

The immediate problems calling for urgent attention are quite formidable. The Pakistani President has to evolve an attitude to Bangla Desh which accepts the reality of its independence and yet does not lead to any great sense of defeat in Pakistan. The best way for Bhutto to do this is to describe the loss of Bangla Desh as good-riddance and to create a feeling in his country that a united Pakistan was unviable and would have been inherently unstable. He has to convince his people that it is only the Pakistan of today that has any hope of achieving stability and ensuring progress to its peoples.

This by itself would not be a very difficult task to accomplish



because many in West Pakistan had for long been tired of the 'brute majority' of the Bengalis in Pakistan. Also, the proposition that the end of the erstwhile absurd State of Pakistan is good for its peoples is valid and may be accepted by the thinking people of West Pakistan without much dissension. But the problem he faces is that this cannot be done without a redefinition of the Pakistani identity and the basis of Pakistani nationalism. Bhutto cannot permit his people to feel that the Qaid-e-Azam was right in creating the Pakistan of 1947 and that he also was right in accepting its break-up in 1971.

A great deal of re-writing of history and revision of attitudes would be necessary to convince the people of Pakistan that their old State should not have come into being in that shape in the first place. This may be too big a task for Bhutto alone to accomplish. Whether he will be able to enlist the co-operation of his country's intellectuals and thinkers to create the feeling that the loss of Bangla Desh is a good-riddance for Pakistan remains to be seen.

If he cannot do so, he will inevitably have to take up the position that it is unfortunate that Pakistan has ceased to exist and to hold out the hope that some day the Bengalis will again be attracted by the Islamic idea and choose to belong to an association with West Pakistan. This could create serious complications for him in the future. To keep the hope of a united Pakistan alive is to commit his entire people to another unrealizable goal and, therefore, to take upon himself the burden of inevitable failure in this respect.

Among the other immediate problems faced by Bhutto, the most important one is that of securing an honourable peace with India. There are two major problems in this regard. In the first place, the prisoners of war have to be taken back to

Pakistan as early as possible. This requires an agreement with India. Secondly, the old international boundary between India and Pakistan has got to be restored. The little territory that Pakistan holds at the end of the 14-day war is no substitute for the losses it has suffered along the India-West Pakistan border. He has to ensure the withdrawal of Indian troops from Sind and other parts of West Pakistan where they have advanced, which again means a dialogue with India.

It is quite clear that the Indian Government will not be averse to the restoration of the international boundary but it might still bargain hard on this question. Also, the uncertainties about the old cease-fire line in Kashmir remain. There will be considerable public pressure on the Government of India not to go back to the old cease-fire line and to hold on to some of the posts which have been taken over, particularly in the Kargil sector. A certain amount of the rationalization of the cease-fire line in Kashmir may, therefore, be inevitable and Pakistan's best bet would be to hope that this process of rationalization of the cease-fire line will mean at least some gains for Pakistan in some sectors to make good its losses in others.

This could, however, be possible only if such a rationalization of the cease-fire line is also the beginning of its acceptance as an international boundary between India and Pakistan. There again Bhutto faces a dilemma. Can he entirely renounce his country's claims to Kashmir without appearing as an appeaser to his people? How would he disown his past in this regard?

If Bhutto cannot immediately conceive a major change in the pattern of relations between Pakistan and India, he will have to think of other foreign policy measures to sustain himself.

One of the apparent ways in which he could try to do so is to become even more dependent on the United States and China and enlist their support in making his country an Israel in this region! This has already been talked of in a number of circles. The problem, however, is that the idea of an Israel in this part of the world rests on two assumptions: one, a high degree of technological competence on the part of the Pakistanis and, two, a low degree of such competence on the part of the Indians.

Neither of these two assumptions is valid at this time and it is not conceivable that the competence ratio between India and Pakistan will vary in favour of the latter in the coming years. The manner in which the Indian armed forces have made use of even those weapons which are relatively unsophisticated compared to the armoury of Pakistan indicates that in fact the competence ratio is very much in India's favour at this time.

But this reality may not prevent Bhutto from pursuing this course for the simple reason that it would be consistent with his own preference of the past.

However, there are other problems. Will America and/or China be prepared to invest in this sort of an enterprise and what will be the price they will demand in return for it? Will not Bhutto's primary task of achieving domestic stability be gravely complicated by a policy of further dependence on two external powers? It is, in fact, possible to assert that these two friends of Pakistan will prove to be Bhutto's greatest liabilities in the months to come. It will be China's effort to prevent any rapprochement between India and Pakistan, which could mean the prevention of stability of West Pakistan itself. Bhutto's major task is to reshape his relations with India. He cannot be friendly with those who regard India as their foe even to

initiate a process of such rapprochement.

**A**s for the United States, its South Asia policy is in shambles and Bhutto will have to wait to see what Washington does in the coming months. Among the various probabilities, one is that in this twilight hour of American presence in this part of the world, its policies will remain utterly confused, contradictory and counterproductive for itself as well as others. Another, that it will begin to treat Pakistan as a part of West Asia and try to tag it on to the Middle Eastern States-system. A third, that it could co-operate with China in sustaining Pakistan's anti-Indian postures.

Bhutto's main problem with the United States will not be so much in regard to his foreign policies as in regard to his domestic policies. If Bhutto is serious about social change in Pakistan, he may find himself to be undermining the position of all those elements in his country which have traditionally depended on American support for their survival. Of particular importance in this respect will be the position of the army leaders.

A different alternative for Pakistan would be to refurbish its relations with the Soviet Union and convey to Moscow that Islamabad will not be averse to much closer friendship with the Soviet Union and that all that it will expect in return is the use of Soviet influence in New Delhi to arrange an honourable peace for Pakistan. In other words, Bhutto may go back to the very spirit of Tashkent that he despised in 1966. The advantages of such a course would be many. The Soviet Union is the only Great Power which could, through friendly persuasion, make New Delhi offer the most favourable terms for Indo-Pakistan co-existence. Also, any agreement between India and Pakistan which is helped by a friendly external power would

be more acceptable to some people in Pakistan than an agreement secured through direct negotiations. It would also help Bhutto to get rid of his present dependence on those external powers who can only queer the pitch for him.

**H**owever, the problems in treading this course are not to be underestimated. It is unlikely that the Soviet Union's recommendation regarding the terms of Indo-Pakistan peace and co-existence would be much different from those that India herself might offer. If Bhutto entertains any idea that the Soviet Union will put pressure on India for any major concession to Pakistan, he may be utterly disillusioned. Islamabad has to start from the assumption that Indo-Soviet relations will remain friendly and firm and that Pakistan will have to find a place under the sun without disturbing this relationship. The old Ayub model of foreign policy, wherein Pakistan was trying to turn the Soviet Union as much as China and America against India, is outmoded for obvious reasons.

With all his problems, this may prove to be the wisest course for Bhutto to adopt. His own survival depends on his ability to de-escalate the anti-Indianism of some of his countrymen and find peace with India. In fact, Bhutto has no choice but to try to come to terms with India either directly or indirectly if he is to remain in power. He cannot go on promising his people a thousand-year war with India without making them feel tired of it before even one year has elapsed.

How will Bhutto go about doing this is the question and one of the possibilities to be kept in mind is that he may spread out the phase of redefinition of foreign policy for a very long period. Faced with so many dilemmas, he may decide not to face any of them. That would be an unsatisfactory state

of affairs but not an unexpected one.

Bhutto's primary task is domestic—to turn the focus of his country's attention on internal problems. A host of such problems are lying under the carpet which the military rulers have spread out to cover the dirt in West Pakistan. Its society is full of inequity and injustice and it would not take much effort on the part of Bhutto to make his people feel that a number of internal problems have to be tackled first. The economic domination of the 22 families, the unjust agrarian pattern, the regional imbalances in West Pakistan, the suppression of civil liberties in the country can all become major issues of Pakistani politics.

So far Bhutto has resorted to well-known gimmicks to appear as a radical to his people. His real test is yet to come. Will he be able to create a set of domestic social and economic issues which will divert the people's attention from external to internal affairs? What sort of problems will he come up against if he were to try to create an egalitarian society in West Pakistan? It is necessary to remember that the vested interests in that society are so well entrenched in seats of power that they may hit out very hard at him if he goes beyond his present beliefs and begins to talk of redistribution of such wealth as is possessed by the top civil servants and army leaders of Pakistan. Even the politics of assassination may be resorted to in order to get rid of a leader who undermines the present social structure of Pakistan.

**B**hutto's main problems in this regard are: (a) the absence of the type of democratic politics in West Pakistani society which might mean a great deal of difficulty in mobilizing public opinion in favour of the much needed social reforms, and (b) the character of his own following within the People's Party and the army of West

Pakistan. Not until Pakistan succeeds in creating a new political system can Bhutto hope to bring about fundamental changes in his country.

**T**he creation of a new political system in Pakistan implies a number of things, each one of which could baffle even the most astute leadership of this country. Patterns of authoritarianism have proved to be disastrous for Pakistan but Bhutto himself is presiding over an authoritarian pattern. It is essential to replace it by a democratic system. Yet, who knows whether democracy would not mean the emergence of insoluble problems for Pakistan! Constitution-making itself will be a difficult task. The problems of the rights of provinces have to be sorted out; what kind of federation would suit the new Pakistan? Again, Pakistan has for too long lived under the presidential system to feel comfortable with the parliamentary system. Bhutto himself is temperamentally more suited to be the country's President than its Prime Minister. On the other hand, where does one draw the line between a presidential system and a dictatorial system in Pakistan.

Another problem would be to redefine the relations between the army and the civil authority. It is clear that Bhutto has been able to dismiss some of the discredited Generals with the help of others in the army, who are hoping to gain from this act of his. The army will have to be sent back to the barracks if the system is to be democratic. So far Bhutto has only relegated some army leaders to insignificance. How will General Gul Hassan or Air Marshal Rahim Khan or General Tikka Khan accept a political system in which they are also required to withdraw from the task of political management in Pakistani society? Should some political role be allotted to the Generals, will it not dilute the content of democracy and will it not make

the task of social reforms even more complex?

Above all, Bhutto has to face the problem of restructuring the economy of Pakistan. The loss of the assured East Pakistani markets is itself a major problem. Even otherwise, the economy of West Pakistan has to be reshaped if self-sustaining growth has to be ensured. What would be the role of foreign aid in such an effort? From what sort of sources will such aid come? Will not foreign aid from certain quarters make the restructuring of the economy more difficult? These are some of the questions which the economists of Pakistan will have to answer. The basic decisions however will have to be political. It is only a firmly established government, which draws its sustenance from the people of Pakistan that can be expected to tackle the basic economic problems of that country.

**I**n brief, therefore, two propositions can be advanced: one, that it is likely that Pakistan will remain a disturbed and confused State for quite some time to come; two, that if Bhutto succeeds in stabilizing himself in Pakistan, it would not be a bad thing for others, particularly India. For, he can do so only by calling off his country's hostility towards us and by turning the searchlight inwards.

It would be better for India to live with a strong, stable democratic and a secular Pakistan than to live with a confused, chaotic, problem-ridden and externally dominated neighbour. Therefore, we should help Bhutto and West Pakistan to revise their basic attitudes and adopt entirely new policies and postures by making it clear that India herself has nothing but the friendliest feelings towards West Pakistan. However, we should also be mentally prepared to live with a Pakistan which is unable to find its feet and which continues to be a source of anxiety for all those who live in its neighbourhood.

# Psychological repercussions

IMTIAZ AHMAD

THE discussion on Bangla Desh has been profuse, but it has suffered from the lack of a relevant perspective. A great deal has been written about the military and international implications of the emergence of an independent Bangla Desh for the sub-continent, while few people have bothered to consider the forces it represents, the lessons that can be drawn from it, and the relevance it has for our own political and social development.

On the one hand, some political analysts have pre-occupied themselves with the revolutionary significance of Bangla Desh and have dissipated their academic energies in showing that it represents the victory of socialist struggles over the forces of imperialism. On the other hand, a second group of analysts have concerned themselves with the international implications of Bangla Desh. They have sug-

gested that the emergence of Bangla Desh as a new factor in the sub-continent has disturbed the traditional patterns of international big-power alignments and precipitated a shift in the structure of power politics.

While agreeing in general that the emergence of an independent Bangla Desh is an event of momentous significance both internationally and militarily, this article shall focus on the relevance of Bangla Desh for India. I shall argue that Bangla Desh is a vivid testimony to the failure of an experiment in nation building and that significant lessons can be drawn from it for our benefit. Moreover, the processes that resulted in the emergence of Bangla Desh are bound to produce a major psychological impact upon large groups of India's population. At present, the full implications of these processes and forces are

not being recognized, but the experience of Bangla Desh can be used to enrich and affirm our own approach to the problem of nation-building and political development.

Perhaps, a brief survey of the historical background to the emergence of Bangla Desh can help us to gauge its relevance for nation-building in our own country. Pakistan, of which Bangla Desh had originally opted to be an integral part at the time of partition, was formed on the basis of a concept of religious nationalism. Jinnah and his followers in the Muslim League had argued that the Muslims, of whom they claimed to be the sole representatives in a plural and otherwise diversified India, constituted a separate nation by virtue of the fact that they adhered to a common religious tradition. Somewhat curiously, these original architects of Pakistan deliberately chose to ignore the deeper distinctions which characterized the different Muslim groups in India because of their geographical situation, language, race and culture.

One of the natural consequences of this attempt, to promote an artificial articulation of an otherwise diversified community was that the religious cleavage came to enjoy paramount importance and replaced the regional, linguistic and ethnic distinctions amongst Muslim groups with the religious community as the principal and dominant form of self-identification in society. Specifically, this meant a shift from status, sect, ethnic origin and locality as the order of 'communal' life to religion as the dominant form of social and political identification. National self-identity came to be understood progressively in religious terms and all problems of nationhood were interpreted in the light of this fact. Such was the social framework within which communal conflicts arose and took their course during the

last phase of the independence movement.

However, religious solidarity and self-identification are a highly situational kind of solidarity and self-identification. Since the political struggle in India had come to be conceptualized in religious terms by the Muslim League and its leadership, the religious solidarity promoted the articulation of the Muslims as a political community. This situation was bound to change when the concern shifted from the creation of a 'homeland' for Muslims to the administration and management of that homeland. At that time, other forms of social cleavages were bound to make their appearance. It should, therefore, have been evident to everyone that the artificial articulation of the Muslims achieved by the Muslim League during the struggle for Pakistan could not outlive the more serious and real economic and political pressures within a predominantly Muslim Pakistan. The political development of the country would require a systematic appeal to solidarities of other kinds.

Jinnah was himself acutely conscious of the tenuous and transitory character of the religious bond as a basis of unit in Pakistan. While addressing the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, he admitted that the critical significance attached to religion could not be adequately sustained in an independent Pakistan.

Contrary to the political philosophy he had preached for well over twenty years, he declared that 'if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses of the poor... We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and the minority communities, the Hindu community and the Muslim community—be-

cause even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vaishnavas, Khatrias, also Bangalees, Madrasses, and so on—will vanish. Now, I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in a religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state.'<sup>1</sup>

No sooner than Pakistan came into existence, the deeper regional, linguistic and ethnic cleavages came to the forefront in that country. Each region advanced its claim for a rightful share and representation in the administration of the country and its resources. What had appeared barely a few months ago to be a monolithic nation united by ties of common religion became a sharply divided country in terms of linguistic, regional and ethnic cleavages and claims of citizenship.

Such cleavages existed within what was West Pakistan itself, but the situation was somewhat complicated by the peculiar geography of the country. Separated by more than twelve hundred miles of Indian territory, the internal cleavages were highlighted against the background of inter-wing conflicts and pressures. Being in a majority, and also being politically more self-conscious, the Bengalis demanded adequate representation, while the West Pakistanis tried to retain their dominance in the political system at the cost of other regional groups.

Against these tensions, religion naturally proved to be a tenuous religious solidarity, first doxically, the architects of

1. *Speeches and Writings of Mr Jinnah* Vol. 2, Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, 1964.

Pakistan who had been aggressively opposed to the idea of the fundamental unity of India found themselves most in need of a viable basis to hold the two separate wings of Pakistan together.

If Pakistan had been an even nominally democratic country, it could be expected that these inner tensions would be resolved through normal democratic channels. But it was destined to be a military dictatorship and this fact determined its future political development. The military rulers tried to keep up the tenuous religious solidarity first by focussing their attention on the Kashmir question and, subsequently, by building up a strong and persistent anti-Indian sentiment amongst its citizenry.

Euphoria is an appropriate description of the level to which this sentiment was carried and its force can be gauged from the remark of the Bengali doctor recently reported by Ajit Bhattacharya, 'Your soldiers really are wonderful...What we have seen contradicts everything we have been told for twenty-five years. Not that we always believed the khans (West Pakistanis), but it takes time to get over such prolonged brainwashing'.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time that the military rulers were keeping up the facade of the unity of Pakistan through their anti-Indian campaigns, they were pursuing a careful and deliberate policy of repression and exploitation in East Bengal. One need not adduce all the statistics to show the extent of that repression and exploitation; they are already well known to need recounting here. Suffice it to say that the strategy worked out by the military rulers for the repression of East Bengal aspirations had two principal facets. On the economic side, it involved the exploitation and utiliza-

tion of the economic resources of East Pakistan for the benefit of the West, thereby contributing to the growth of economic disparity between the two wings and the pauperization of the people of East Bengal. On the cultural plane, their strategy consisted of a conscious attempt to promote the gradual Islamization of Bengali culture and imposition of Urdu and a Persianized vocabulary on the Bengali language.

The proclamation of the People's Republic of Bangla Desh was a direct response to these exploitative and oppressive policies of the military rulers of Pakistan and the disenchantment of the people of East Pakistan with a political system which did not guarantee them adequate representation and share in power and resources.

But, in bringing about the establishment of an independent and free Bangla Desh, the East Bengalis have not merely secured their emancipation from an oppressive colonial rule, though that would seem to be the most obvious immediate gain of their political struggle. To argue that would be to miss completely the full significance of Bangla nationalism and its internal transformations since partition. In establishing themselves as a free and independent nation, the Bengalis have undergone a process of complete ideological and psychological re-birth and re-orientation. And it is this process of re-orientation that offers the most relevant lessons for us today.

The essence of this re-birth and re-orientation consists in a shift from a communal and religion-based world view and approach to politics to a course of secular politics. Historically, in undivided Bengal, the political differences between the Hindus and Muslims, reinforced by economic differences, had promoted a communal, or at least a separatist, outlook among the Bengali Muslims and encouraged them to seek out sepa-

ration and partition as a measure of safeguarding their interests against a possible future subordination in a predominantly Hindu India.

Several leaders of East Bengal were formerly advocates of partition and the separation of East Bengal from a united India, and Sheikh Mujibur Rehman was himself a great champion of partition. Experience of a religion-based polity, the continued frustration of their aspirations, and the failure of a religious approach to politics to provide relief to the people, forced the Bengalis to undertake a re-appraisal of their original choice and to turn their back against religious politics and nationalism and to seek a secular and non-religious basis for their political future.

This shift from a religious and communal orientation to politics to a nationalism rooted in economic and social well-being has a direct relevance for us. Paradoxically, India had had a powerful and vigorous national movement, but it was not a nation. It was held together through the force of the personal charisma of its national leaders, and the imperialist character of British domination. Consequently, the nationalist movement was deeply fragmented, amorphous, and divided into a number of regional and ethnic sub-movements. There were periodic attempts to promote a sense of unified nationalism by leading nationalists, but the precise content and meaning of that nationalism varied from time to time.

On the one hand, the founding fathers of the Indian National Congress and several secular-minded leaders in the tradition of the founding fathers tried to define nationalism in territorial and economic terms and to promote the articulation of the people in political terms. On the other hand, some other leaders tried to create a nationalism through exploitation

2. Ajit Bhattacharya, 'Bangla Desh Settles Down: Relationship with India', *The Times of India*, January 3, 1970, p. 6.

of the collective emotions of the people by appealing to them in the name of religion and the nation to come. Jinnah was a leading advocate of this kind of nationalism, but it also had its advocates amongst the Hindus.

Soon after independence, Indian leaders had to address themselves to the task of nation-building. Experience of the past as well as their ideological orientations had convinced them that the answer to the problem of national unity in a plural society like India could not be found within a framework of religious and ethnic nationalism. A sense of common citizenship, social and economic well-being of all citizens, and the sharing of a common political future could alone promote the integration of its different sub-cultures and social strata.

Consequently, they set the goal of secularism and equality and welfare of all citizens without regard to differences in their caste, creed and ethnic origin as the cardinal principles of Indian nationhood. The task of nation-building since independence in India has been based on these goals of national policy.

Secularism and social equality of all citizens are, however, mere goals of social policy. This does not mean that these goals have already been recognized. As a matter of fact, there have been serious and obvious shortcomings in the adequate and complete realization of these goals. Economic disparities, linguistic and ethnic chauvinisms, and social inequalities continue to persist and pose occasional threats to the political and emotional integration of the country.

Nevertheless, the recent developments in Pakistan and the emergence of an independent Bangla Desh offer satisfactory confirmation of the fact that the basic approach to the prob-

lem of nation-building in this country had been fundamentally sound. Perhaps, what is needed in the future is to reaffirm and strengthen the processes of secularization, economic development aimed at the elimination of economic disparities and feelings of economic and social discrimination, and removal of poverty of large sections of the population. For, unless regional disparities, economic frustrations and grievances, and fears of linguistic and cultural domination among large sections of the population are not quickly and rapidly eliminated, the cohesive integration of the country shall continue to be tenuous.

In this connection, it may be useful to refer to the implications of Bangla Desh for the practice of the federal idea. It shows that in a plural society the success of political unification depends to a considerable extent upon the relative security and autonomy of its constituent geographical units.

So long as the relations between the federal government and the constituent States are structured upon a principle of a satisfactory balancing of the federal control and the relative autonomy of the States, the federal State has a chance of survival. If the federal government becomes too strong and powerful to disregard the claims of the constituent parts as it did in Pakistan, the Centre-State relations are characterized by constant friction, and the States suffer from a sense of domination by a powerful centre, the success and stability of the federal structure remains in jeopardy.

There is no immediate and serious threat to the Indian federal structure in the near future, but there is need that existing irritations and conflicts between the States and the Centre and the grievances of some of the States against domination by the Centre should be readily resolved and placed on a new footing of mutual accept-

ance and accommodation. This alone will ensure the territorial integration and stability of so large and diversified a country as India.

Several political groups in India do not place sufficient faith in the efficacy of secularism and federalism as the basis of political integration in India. On the contrary, they believe that the unity of India has a better chance of being fostered through a unitary form of government and the promotion of a religio-ethnic national consciousness. For example, the Jana Sangh has since its inception called for the creation of a unitary structure in India. Recently, it has also been calling for the Indianisation of certain social and cultural groups in India as a means of fostering a sense of nationalism amongst Indians.

The idea of Indianisation rests on an assumption about the supremacy of the Aryan religious culture and definition of the rights of citizenship in terms of adherence to that cultural tradition. Bangla Desh is an eloquent testimony against all such narrow definitions of national identity and citizenship. It clearly shows that the bond of religious unity is at best a tenuous one; and, in today's changing world, citizenship and nationhood are political concepts and not religious ones. A modern nation rests on the social and economic well-being of its citizens and on its ability to guarantee them equal participation in the political process rather than their sharing, or preparedness to share, a common religious culture.

This point is so obvious today that it should hardly be necessary to emphasize it here. However, I emphasize it because it appears that it is still not adequately recognized. For example, a correspondent in the 'Economic and Political Weekly' called for the Indian military intervention in Bangla Desh, because he felt that such inter-

vention would ensure a change in the thinking and orientations of the Muslims in India.<sup>3</sup>

The case for Indian military intervention in Bangla Desh to enable the East Bengalis to realize their aspirations for independence has always been strong. The question of the necessity of forcing a change in the orientation of the Muslims in India apart, the whole experience of the Bangla Desh struggle would seem to militate strongly against the efficacy of force as a means of affecting changes in the orientations of any large sections of people in a country.

Such application of force is more likely to generate greater resistance and strengthen prevailing political attitudes. Perhaps, a slow and gradual promotion of a sense of social security and economic well-being can do more to encourage new and more liberal orientations than the use of force. Moreover, such use of force may be feasible in a military dictatorship like Pakistan; it is highly questionable that it could be advocated seriously in a democratic polity.

The emergence of a free Bangla Desh is sure to produce a deep social and psychological impact upon the minds of both Hindus and Muslims and also promote a change in the pattern of relationships between the two communities. The factors leading to the rise of the agitation for Pakistan, the frequent outbursts of communal violence throughout the struggle for independence, and the bloodshed which accompanied partition, had left a certain bitterness in the minds of many Hindus. This bitterness occasionally found its expression in the pattern of relations between Hindus and Muslims. Moreover, the continued involvement of some sections of Muslims with the idea

of Pakistan and the strongly Hindu undertones of Pakistan's anti-Indian propaganda over the decades had fostered an identification of Muslims with Pakistan in the minds of some sections of Hindus.

All this has contributed to the deterioration of the relations between the two countries which were marked by mutual suspicion and, occasionally, distrust. For example, a sociological investigation carried out at the time of the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war found that more than eighty per cent Hindu respondents in the rural areas not only identified Muslims with Pakistan by answering questions about that country in terms of Muslims, but felt suspicious and hostile towards the latter.

Such negative psychological attitudes and perceptions are sure to come under a new scrutiny in the minds of most Hindus. For instance, the fact that the majority of Pakistan's Muslim population has not only turned to India for help in a time of crisis, but also extended a hand of friendship toward it, should serve to dispel some of the traditional prejudices against Muslims in terms of their identification with Pakistan and encourage an appraisal of Muslims in India in their own, and evidently a new, context.

It is too early to assess whether this re-appraisal will necessarily be favourable to Muslims; a great deal is likely to depend upon the Muslim response to the newly emergent political situation and its capacity to assume a more realistic and dynamic role in the participatory democratic process. Nevertheless, there is little scope to doubt that the present situation offers a suitable opportunity, one might almost say a turning point, for a restructuring of social and political relations between Hindus and Muslims.

For Muslims the emergence of a free Bangla Desh has im-

measurably greater significance and its impact is also likely to be deeper. One may not be able to map out the direction of that impact as yet, but certain broad trends are already evident. For example, the emergence of Bangla nationalism and, subsequently, Bangla Desh has served to terminate the political significance of Islam as a basis of political unity and the psychological attachment which at least some Muslims felt for Pakistan as a predominantly Muslim country:

Pakistan was no doubt founded on the slogan of a 'homeland' for Muslims, but now the total number of Muslims in Bangla Desh and India would be more than in Pakistan. Moreover, despite having the second and the largest Muslim population in the world, both countries are committed to secularism and democratic government. Already, there are signs that these facts are unsettling the more conventional patterns of thought within the community.

Secondly, the emergence of Bangla Desh should enable the Muslims to appreciate and accept secularism on a more positive basis. Home years ago, Professor W. C. Smith had suggested that the situation of Muslims in India was unique in the entire history of their faith; for the first time in their history they were placed in a position of equal participation with another community rather than in clear super-ordination or subordination to it. Smith thought that this situation was both challenging and likely to produce a creative response from the community.

One of the major hindrances to this creative response has been the failure of the Muslims to recognize the positive value of secularism and to take up a positive equality in the power structure of the country. One can see that the emergence of Bangla nationalism will

3. Gopal Krishna, 'Bangla Desh', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Aug. 14, 1970 pp. 1749-1751.



strengthen the realization among large sections of Muslims that secularism is not a mere slogan but rather a positive principle based on democratic traditions and liberal thought; and, further, that secularism of the State does not weaken their position as a religious and cultural community but can provide strength to that status and safeguard their religious freedom.

At present, the Muslims are somewhat dazed, and many of them do not know how to respond to the changing political situation. Partly, this state of mind arises from their failure to grasp the full meaning of these developments and to adjust to them. Partly it arises from certain uncertainties about the attitudes of the majority towards them in the new situation. It is, nevertheless, certain that these developments are bound to touch the community in ways deeper than may at first seem. It should help it to liberate itself from the chains of its own traditional patterns of thought and may pave the way for a complete psychological re-creation of its members for a more dynamic and constructive role in a modern India.

Some of us may be tempted to assume that the forces set in motion by the emergence of Bangla Desh will crystalize and promote changes on their own. Submission to such a temptation at this stage can result in a total loss of the full and radical impact of those forces. It would be necessary to harness and direct them into constructive channels for our own benefit. Liberal and secular-minded intellectuals and politicians should use their energies to put content and meaning in the forces which the emergence of Bangla Desh has created. In this sense, the present is a moment of action. It, however, remains to be seen if they will be able to harness and channelize those forces towards constructive and creative ends.

# Economic dimensions

BOUDHAYAN CHATTOPADHYAY

IT has been the conviction of many of those who could keep track of the developments since the last general elections in India and Bangla Desh somewhat closely, that there was a certain link between the rout of the Grand Alliance in India and Yahya's decision to force a show down in Bangla Desh. The two happened in the same fortnight. The U.S. Representative in Dacca often personally witnessed the drift of the negotiations between Yahya and Mujib to disaster. Small wonder that the Seventh Fleet rushed down all the way to cast its ominous shadow. For the long nine months Yahya could not be persuaded to open negotiations with Mujib, while it took the Nixon Administration not even 24 hours to brand India as the aggressor. The hypothesis suggests itself, then, that an external instrument was being sought to avenge the failure to reverse the popular tide against the Right in India as well as the failure to get Mujib to hand over the Sandwip islands for the U.S. to build a mini Okinawa.

The Nixon Administration's as well as the Pentagon's stakes in the Indian sub-continent must be rather high. That is understandable. That the split in the Congress and the populist tide in India pressing upon the all-India leadership to move to the Left, would call forth a virtual capital strike in India and lead almost to an industrial

slump, is also understandable. What is, however, less easily understandable is that policy makers in the economic ministries in India should have thought it possible at this very moment to get away with a sly dosage of further devaluation of the rupee. Every war with Pakistan has to be followed by a devaluation, apparently, so that we can keep emitting the right signals for those who care to take note of the fact that, after all, India is on the right rails, and shall not misbehave overmuch.<sup>1</sup>

But, did somebody in these economic ministries also figure out whether the Sovereign Republic of Bangla Desh would still have the option *not* to devalue along with the Indian currency? After all, Pakistan did not devalue along with us in 1966. From all available evidence, the Sovereign Republic of Bangla Desh would *not* have the option for quite some time to come. The Bangla Desh rupee will have to remain firmly tied to the Indian rupee. And, with jute and tea virtually the only hard currency earners, Bangla Desh can hope to gain absolutely nothing from a currency depreciation. We have chosen for them, and have, very likely, compromised their long term interests. Not that India has anything to gain from this further dose of devaluation. So what? A collaborationist psychosis must govern India's chief financial decision makers, no matter where the Seventh Fleet is.

The Bangla Desh currency will have to remain tied to the vicissitudes of the Indian currency for quite some time to

1. We have actually depreciated to the extent of 5.51 per cent in respect of the dollar, 5.33 per cent in respect of the pound, nearly 10 per cent in respect of the mark, and about 13 per cent in respect of the yen. Since a further margin of 2.25 per cent fluctuation would be allowed by the IMF, the actual extent of devaluation would be even more, from 8 per cent to 15.5 per cent nearly. Since this article was written, the apprehended devaluation of the Bangla Desh rupee has taken place.

TABLE 1  
Foreign Trade of Bangla Desh

	International	With West Pakistan	(Rs. Crores) Total
<b>1960-61</b>			
Exports	125.9	36.4	162.3
Imports	101.4	82.6	184.0
Balance	+24.5	-46.2	-21.7
<b>1968-69</b>			
Exports	154.3	87.1	241.4
Imports	185.0	138.5	323.5
Balance	-30.7	-51.4	-82.1

TABLE 2A  
Exports and Imports of Bangla Desh to and from West Pakistan

				<i>Bangla Desh's Exports to West Pakistan</i>
Commodity				1968-69 (Rs. crores)
<b>Primary</b>				
Betelnuts	..	..	..	0.85
Spices	..	..	..	0.98
Wood and timber	..	..	..	1.17
Others	..	..	..	7.85
<b>Others</b>				
Tea	..	..	..	22.89
Jute goods	..	..	..	14.22
Paper and paper board	..	..	..	9.10
Matches	..	..	..	3.17
Leather	..	..	..	2.96
All other Articles	..	..	..	16.27
Foreign merchandise	..	..	..	0.28
Total	..	..	..	87.12
				<i>Bangla Desh's Imports from West Pakistan</i>
Commodity				1968-69 (Rs. crores)
<b>Primary</b>				
Oilseeds	..	..	..	11.50
Raw cotton	..	..	..	15.78
Tobacco	..	..	..	10.14
Food grains	..	..	..	14.92
All other commodities	..	..	..	10.38
<b>Others</b>				
Cotton fabrics	..	..	..	21.72
Cotton yarn and thread	..	..	..	6.12
Machinery	..	..	..	6.64
Drugs and medicines	..	..	..	5.39
Tobacco manufactures	..	..	..	2.22
Metal manufactures	..	..	..	1.88
Rape and mustard oil	..	..	..	0.75
Rubber goods	..	..	..	1.45
Paper and paper board	..	..	..	2.61
Vegetable oil non-essential	..	..	..	1.12
Cement	..	..	..	7.02
All other commodities	..	..	..	14.63
Foreign Merchandise	..	..	..	4.29
Total	..	..	..	138.54

Source: The Economic Times, December 7, 1971.

come, simply because India is going to remain her chief and dominant trading partner. Moreover, she will most probably also have a large trade deficit with India. The reasons are pretty obvious. The foreign trade of Bangla Desh in 1968-69 is given in Table I.

**T**he total trade turnover of Bangla Desh was, thus, Rs. 565 crores. Converted into Indian currency by the rates prevailing in 1968-69, the amount would be nearly Rs. 850 crores. Assuming that India would have to fill up the gap not only for West Pakistan, but, for some time, for a large part of the international account also—at least with the non-East European countries—and taking account of the normal growth over three years as well as the extraordinary demands of rehabilitation, the total trade turnover with India may not be very much less than Rs. 1000 crores in the coming years. It would appear, therefore, that the estimate of Rs. 1000 crores (in Indian currency) currently emanating from certain Bangla Desh sources is not far out, unless of course the Bangla Desh currency also devalues substantially, i.e., unless the terms of trade are allowed to move suddenly more to the disadvantage of Bangla Desh.

Now, it is difficult to see how Bangla Desh can hope to export more than Rs. 350 crores (at the old exchange rate) to India annually in the near future. Particularly so, if we are not going to buy jute and tea from Bangla Desh as West Pakistan used to. It is absurd to claim that the supply of fish can substitute fully for the jute goods and tea that used to be absorbed by West Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> We may at

2. The total annual catch of fish was 2.72 lakh tons in Bangla Desh in 1968-69. There has been a claim, of course, that as much as Rs. 10 crores worth of fish can be exported to West Bengal and India. It is true that as much as 75% of Calcutta's fish supply used to come from Bangla Desh. But Rs. 10 crores looks over optimistic.

TABLE 2B  
Impact of a Separate Bangla Desh on Pakistan's Economy

Item	Pakistan	Bangla Desh	% share of Bangla Desh to total (i.e. the loss to Pakistan)
1. Population (million)	126*	75*	59.5
2. Agriculture (1969-70) (000-ton)			
(a) Rice	14162	11816	83.4
(b) Food crops	23365	11998	51.4
(c) Sesamum	36	30	83.3
(d) Jute	1319	1319	100.0
(e) Tea	29.8	29.8	100.0
(f) Tobacco	161	41	25.5
(g) Sugarcane	33370	7418	22.2
3. Industry (1969-70)			
(a) Tea (lakh lbs.)	696	696	100.0
(b) Cigarettes (crore Nos.)	4022	1778	44.2
(c) Cotton yarn (crore lbs.)	70.8	10.6	15.0
(d) Jute goods (000 tons)	580	580	100.0
(e) Urea (000 tons)	297.4	94.3	31.7
(f) Safety matches (lakh gross boxed)	140.7	129.6	92.1
(g) Sulphuric acid (000 tons)	37.5	6.5	17.3
(h) Printing paper (000 tons)	21.4	21.4	100.0
(i) Writing paper (000 tons)	10.3	10.3	100.0
(j) Packing paper (000 tons)	10.5	10.5	100.0
(k) Newsprint (000 tons)	35.7	35.7	100.0
4. Exports (Rs. crores, 1969-70)	333.71	167.01	50.0
5. Public finance (Rs. Crores)			
(a) Tax revenue from customs (1970-71 Budget)	181	98*	54.1
(b) Central Excise, (,,)	286	154*	53.8
(c) Income Tax (,,)	118	64*	54.2
(d) Sales tax (,,)	78	42*	53.8
(e) Others (,,)	18	10*	55.6

\* Estimated.

Source: The Economic Times, December 17, 1971.

best buy a marginal amount of raw jute. Even if one took into account the substantial transit income that would accrue to Bangla Desh, once the rail and riverine services reopen between West Bengal, Tripura, Meghalay and Assam through Bangla Desh, it is unlikely that the trade deficit would be less than Rs. 250 to 300 crores. *This trade deficit can only be sustained by an equal amount of capital outflow from India into Bangla Desh.*

A look at Table 2 would bear out the above presumption. Nearly 43 per cent of Bangla Desh's exports to West Pakistan are constituted of jute goods and tea for which we have no use. We have some use for the fine raw jute of Bangla Desh. But, unless we are going to re-

produce the old colonial pattern of East Bengal being the agricultural hinterland of the Calcutta industrial conurbation, there is no reason why Bangla Desh should not process all her raw jute herself, export it and import the wherewithal of her development programme.

All her imports from West Pakistan and most of her capital goods requirements from western countries also can, of course, be supplied by us. But, her requirements are going to be somewhat extraordinary for quite some time. For instance, of the immediate rehabilitation costs, which amount to Rs. 700 crores according to some preliminary estimates, not more than Rs. 250 crores worth of resources can be raised from Bangla Desh. In the matter of rehabilitation,

time is an important factor. For instance, 200 riverine crafts have to be repaired over the next two months. Port facilities, roads, bridges, etc., have to be made serviceable in the quickest possible time to restore the normal sinews of the economy. These repair works will require, by April, 1972, as much as 4 lakh tonnes of cement, 7 lakh tonnes of brick-making non-coking coal,<sup>3</sup> 1 lakh tonnes of steel rods, 30,000 tonnes of heavy steel structurals. Over and above this, some 2 lakh tonnes of foodgrains (mainly rice) will have to be rushed every month.<sup>4</sup>

Bangla Desh would normally have about 2 million tonnes of annual deficit in rice.<sup>5</sup> With only 10 per cent of rice production entering marketing channels in Bangla Desh normally, procurement would be difficult, unless a rigorous system of levies can be implemented with the help of village committees. It is likely that stocks have been sharply depleted. Hence, to sustain a system of rationing for the non-agricultural population imports would have to be substantially larger than the deficit.<sup>6</sup>

Normally, Bangla Desh would produce only one metre of cloth per head as against 16 metres in India. Bangla Desh produces little raw cotton of which we, too, have to import considerable quantities. Moreover, production in Bangla Desh mills will take quite some time to pick up. Oil and kerosene will also have to be imported.

Under the circumstances, some estimates of annual re-

quirements which are currently being talked about, such as, Rs. 100 crores worth of textiles, Rs. 100 crores of coal, Rs. 15 crores of cement, Rs. 10 crores of drugs and medicines, etc., do not seem to be exaggerated. Rs. 1000 crores worth of total trade turnover between Bangla Desh and India would, on the face of it, seem to be altogether within the realm of possibility. That would be nearly 30 per cent of the national income of Bangla Desh!<sup>7</sup> The trade deficit of Rs. 250-300 crores would, under the circumstances, appear to be rather on the low side.

It is true that most of the manufactures required by Bangla Desh can be supplied by India without much difficulty. In fact, the capacities of the sick textile mills of West Bengal currently being taken over, and the large excess capacities (more than 50 per cent) in West Bengal's engineering and chemical units, can conceivably be absorbed, provided raw material bottlenecks can be removed. Clearly, these prospects of a sudden buoyancy in demand have proved to be a shot in the arm for the Calcutta Stock Exchange which woke up from its long slumber during the last two weeks of December, 1971.

It is also likely that sections of Indian big capital have sensed windfalls going beyond the acquisition of a big market for goods only—a market which will, for some time, be altogether dependent on Indian supplies. No wonder, therefore, that some gentlemen of Indian big business have offered to lead on-the-spot assessment teams to Bangla Desh. There has been some talk of joint ventures of Indian capital in Bangla Desh. And, this is precisely how a large trade deficit of Bangla Desh with India, implying corresponding capital outflows from India, would seem to fit the bill, unless it is the intention of the

Governments of India and Bangla Desh to restrict the economic transactions between the two countries largely to inter-governmental agencies.

The Government of Bangla Desh and the Awami League are pledged to a policy of nationalisation of key industries and financial institutions. To start with, however, it would be possible for them only to take over the West Pakistani interests, particularly in jute and tea. They should, by now, be seriously considering confiscation of these interests. It is unlikely, however, that they would touch the substantial British interests in tea and jute.<sup>8</sup> After all, U.K. did abstain in UN voting in expectation of some pay-off! British recognition may also be forthcoming sooner than later. There may also, conceivably, be business and political interests of the indigenous sort in Bangla Desh, which will, initially at least, feel like propping themselves up with the help of Indian and British private capital. In fact, the talk of joint ventures with Indian capital has emanated sometimes from certain Bangla Desh circles themselves. One can rely on the gentlemen members of Indian big business to forge suitable links with such indigenous interests in Bangla Desh, unless, of course, the governments of the two countries think and act otherwise. And, why not? Are not labour costs in Bangla Desh lower than in Eastern India?

Is it not legitimate to presume that the Bangla Desh market will, for some time at least, be helpless enough to be converted to a captive market? In fact, with the Americans conveniently out of the way, for the time being at least, the British-Indian big capital located in the familiar Clive Street (now Netaji Subhas Road) areas of what was once the famous Dal-

3. The MMTC has already committed 1 million tonnes of coal to meet immediate requirements.

4. The estimates publicly available till now are mostly somewhat conjectural, incomplete and scrappy.

5. According to U.S.A.I.D. estimates.

6. A Rice Community in the form of a sub-regional grouping of India, Bangla Desh, Burma and Thailand suggests itself as the mechanism to meet the rice deficit of the sub-continent with the indisposable rice surplus of Burma and Thailand.

7. At old exchange rates.

8. British control seems to account for more than half of Bangla Desh tea. West Pakistan interests have since been taken over.

housie Square (now Binoy-Badal-Dinesh Square, named after the three Bengal revolutionaries killed by the British) of Calcutta, may profitably start looking eastward again. After all, in tea and jute, it is still very much British-Indian 'joint venture' on this side of Bengal. Moreover, the MRTTP Act provides further incentives for large houses to expand their capacities just across the border and thereby evade the jurisdiction of the Monopolies Commission on this side of the border.<sup>9</sup>

**M**oreover, in jute, there are proximate issues to settle. Pakistan (no jute is produced in West Pakistan) was India's chief competitor in the world jute market. It was a situation of competitive duopoly, with Pakistan acting as the price setter, because Bangla Desh, which produced all Pakistan's jute, enjoyed, and will continue to enjoy, what Adam Smith would call 'absolute advantage' in the production of jute. She produced and will continue to produce jute fibres more easily and of better quality. Her mills, having been set up over the last two decades only, were, and will remain, much more modern than the Indian counterparts in West Bengal, which are mostly rather ancient, notwithstanding the various rationalisation and modernisation programmes. Labour costs are lower in Bangla Desh, and will remain so for quite some time.

Acting as the price-setter, Pakistan was, till recently underquoting India by 2 to 5 per cent in hessian, and as much as 30 per cent in sacking. India's sacking exports declined from 3,13,000 tonnes in 1960 to 94,000 tonnes in 1968, while those of Pakistan increased from 1,24,000 tonnes to 2,43,000 tonnes over the same period.

And the western world market for jute is a shrinking mar-

ket because of the challenge of synthetics. Even in carpet backing, which was supposed to offset the shrinking demand for the traditional hessian and sacking, the share of jute in the U.S. carpet backings came down from 80.6 per cent in 1968 to 61.6 per cent in 1970, that of synthetics having gone up from 16 per cent to 33 per cent. After Yahya Khan decided to let loose his beasts in Bangla Desh, Indian exports of jute manufactures over the first quarter of 1971 (April-July) rose by Rs. 17.88 crores, as Pakistan virtually went out of the market.

It is quite in the fitness of things that a Jute Community, in the nature of the European Steel Community, takes shape—as it should—to convert the situation of competitive duopoly into a situation of bilateral monopoly vis-a-vis the western jute market. But, such an otherwise welcome system of collusive arrangement can be undertaken as purely an inter-governmental agreement or as a system of collusion among the chief British-Indian producers and exporters of jute manufactures—units in Bangla Desh, private or public, being part of the system, backed by formal inter-governmental agreements.

**I**t is quite in the fitness of things, and within the realm of immediate practical possibility, that such an agreement may also be extended to cover tea and ultimately to the entire economy of Bangla Desh getting integrated within the framework of a Customs and Payments union. All these arrangements, otherwise altogether welcome for both the economies, would also, however, be eminently suitable for 'joint ventures' of British-Indian big capital with Bangla Desh capital (private or public). All the so-called scale-economies will thereby be available to such 'joint ventures', the Tatas and the Kanorias obliging.

There is, however, one serious lacuna in all this glorious future.

There have been reports on record that when the U.S. Representative in Dacca offered support to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, even with arms, provided Mujib agreed to hand over the Sandwip islands for the U.S. to set up a mini Okinawa, the obdurate Sheikh showed him the door and told him never to mention this perfidy in his presence. Mujib possibly thought that he was not fighting to get the West Pakistani army out only to pave the way for the U.S. army to come swaggering in (Okinawa has 10,000 Japanese girls 'servicing' the GIs—close competitors, no doubt, of the yahoos of Yahya!).

**S**imilarly, the 150,000 Bengali guerillas, who are armed now, may take it into their heads to refuse to invite the 75 famous large Indian 'houses' having thrown out the domination of the 22 West Pakistani 'families'. It may not also be possible to persuade the Indian army, which has now acquired the role and character of a liberation army, that this is what 10,000 of their brothers have died for.

We cannot participate in the noble task of reconstruction of Bangla Desh without altering in an essential way the premises of our own economy, and the pattern of articulation of our own external economic relations. If we fail to do that, one shudders to think of the consequences of the kind of backlash that we shall provoke into existence not merely in Bangla Desh but in the whole of eastern India. We owe it to ourselves, to our own dead and maimed, that at least the major British Indian big business interests in tea and jute in West Bengal are nationalised here and now, and a strict vigil is mounted, preferably by the Monopolies Commission itself, on the so-called 'joint-venture' activities of business houses located in India, Indian or foreign.

That will pave the way for a genuine integration of the eco-

9. Even companies with U.S. majority apita are reportedly on a stuffing expedition in Bangla Desh.

nomy of Bangla Desh with the economy of Eastern India. A Jute Community, Tea Community (along with Ceylon?) a Customs and a Payments Union, total Inter-Governmental State Trading, a single Electricity and a single Water Resources grid for the whole of Eastern India and Bangla Desh can then follow to lay the foundations of a long term perspective plan based on the immense water and mineral resources of the entire Lower Ganges-Brahmaputra Basin. Such a plan was once worked out by a study team under the auspices of the F.A.O. We can then double the per capita output of the whole of Eastern India and Bangla Desh within 15-20 years.<sup>10</sup>

It is worth while to remind ourselves that the House that Lord Cornwallis had built on the Permanent Settlement, of which indigo, jute and tea formed the three pillars, and the Calcutta conurbation formed the overvaulting arch of colonial industrialisation under the shade of which the British-Indian Managing Agents set up their nice little pigeon holes—the foundations of that House have been finally pulverised by the victorious entry of Lal Behari De's, Dina Bandhu Mitra's and Titu Mir's Bengal Peasant into the arena of full-fledged nationhood.

Attempts to turn the hands of the clock back can never succeed. They can, however, prolong the agony, raise the costs still further. But costs have already been too high, haven't they?

The threat was directed as much against them as against us. So, now, let their reconstruction be ours also. The battle against poverty is indivisible in this entire sub-continent in a very essential manner. And, the tiger has tasted blood at one corner of the sub-conti-

ment. The limits of a non-violent freedom struggle have been crossed. And, the struggle has had a strong egalitarian content from the outset.

It is possible that, in the initial stages, the very state of the Bangla Desh economy will rule

out usual commercial exchange. It is also possible that, so long as the situation remains politically sensitive, the economic transactions will be on a strictly inter-governmental basis. But, no market economy can afford to suspend the logic of its modes of capital accumulation from

#### APPENDIX A Structure of Bangla Desh Economy

Variable	Unit of Measurement	Year	Bangla Desh
1. Population	Thd.	1961 (1969-70)	5,08,40 6,89,07
2. Area	Sq. miles	1961	55,126
3. Density	Person per sq. mile	1961 1969-70	922 1,250
4. Civilian Labour Force	Thd.	1961	16,853
(i) Agriculturists	"	"	14,336
(ii) Non-agriculturists	"	"	2,522
5. Land Utilization			
(i) Forest	Thd. Acres	1965-66	5,400
(ii) Cultivable Waste	"	"	1,255
(iii) Net cropped Area	"	"	21,601
6. Rice			
(i) Area	Thd. Acres	1968-69	3,628
(ii) Production	Thd. Tons	"	10,933
(iii) Yield	Maunds	"	12.6
7. Jute			
(i) Area	Thd Acres	1968-69	2,219
(ii) Production	Thd. Tons	"	1,050
(iii) Yield	Maunds	"	12.9
8. Tea			
(i) Area	Thd Acres	1968-69	103
(ii) Production	Thd. Tons	"	28.1
(iii) Yield	Maunds	"	7.4
9. Registered Factories			
(i) No. of Establishments	No.	1963-64	2,010
(ii) Value of Fixed Assets	Rs.	"	15,37,074
(iii) Average Daily Employed	No.	"	2,04,599
(iv) Value added by manufacture	Rs.	"	9,74,504
10. Minerals			
(i) Gas	Thd. cft.	1964	57,46,973
(ii) Limestone	tons	"	15,042
11. Cotton Textiles			
(i) Reported Mills	Number	1967-68	37
(ii) Production of cloth	Thd. yds.	"	52,025
12. Jute Textiles			
(i) Reported Mills	Number	1967-68	40
(ii) Production	Ton	"	4,90,535
13. Sugar			
(i) Reported Mills	Number	1967-68	10
(ii) Production	Ton	"	90,997
14. Vegetable Products			
(i) Reported Mills	Number	1967-68	4
(ii) Production	Ton	"	5,754

10. At the beginning of the sixties, an estimate of the total hidel power potential of the Brahmaputra put the figure at the colossal amount of six times the then total world production of such power.

(Continued on following page)

the field of its external economic relations with any country except in the very short run. And, even inter-governmental economic transactions, to the extent that they are not just outright grants, have to take place at certain prices. Consequently, to the extent that India's price structure—particularly the prices of manufactures—is governed by mercantilist-oligopolist preferences, Bangla Desh's terms of trade with India would have a built-in tendency to move adversely. This was precisely one of the mechanisms through which resources were drained out of Bangla Desh to West Pakistan.

India's external economic relations with Bangla Desh, or, for that matter, with any developing country of the third world cannot be placed on a stable fraternal footing without altering the very premises of the logic of capital accumulation extant in our 'mixed' market economy. It is in this very basic sense that their reconstruction has got to be ours also.

<b>15. Paper</b>			
(i) Printing paper	Ton	1967-68	19,950
(ii) Writing paper	"	"	10,310
(iii) Newsprint	"	"	8,651
<b>16. Chemical Fertilisers: Urea</b>			
	Ton	1967-68	1,12,000
<b>17. Chemicals:</b>			
(i) Caustic soda	Ton	1967-68	3,661
(ii) Sulphuric acid	"	"	5,485
(iii) Chlorine gas	"	"	3,201
<b>18. Cement</b>			
	Ton	1967-68	83
<b>19. Transport</b>			
(i) No. of Road Vehicles	Number	1966	48,475
(ii) Locomotives	"	1965-66	482
<b>20. Manpower: Admission</b>			
(i) Vocational courses	Number	1964-65	3,300
(ii) Polytechniques	"	"	1,900
(iii) Engineering colleges	"	"	480
<b>21. Medical Facilities</b>			
(i) Registered Doctors	Number	1965	6,864
(ii) Hospital Beds	"	"	6,984
<b>22. Percentage of Educated persons in Specified Age-groups:</b>			
All ages (5 & over)	Percentage	1961	18.1
5-9	"	"	11.7
10-14	"	"	30.1
15-19	"	"	24.0
20-24	"	"	21.2
25 & over	"	"	16.5

Source: Data Compiled at the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi, from publication of the Government of Pakistan

## APPENDIX B

### Comparative Levels of Development: Bangla Desh and West Pakistan

Variable	Unit of Measurement	Year	Bangla Desh	West Pakistan	Year	Bangla Desh	West Pakistan
1. Population	Thousand	1951	41,932	31,948	1961	50,840	42,880
2. Area	Sq. miles		55,126	310,403	1969-70	68,907	57,635
3. Gross National Product	Rupees Million (at 1959-60 prices)	1949-50	12,360	12,106	1964-65	19,455	21,070
4. Per Capita Income	Rupees	"	287	338	1969-70	23,783	28,596
5. Share of G.N.P.					1964-65	318	411
(i) Agriculture	Percentage	1949-50	62.25	54.59	1969-70	345	496
(ii) Manufacturing	"	"	3.80	7.94			
(iii) Construction	"	"	0.48	1.49			
(iv) Others	"	"	33.47	35.98			
6. Gross Investment Ratio	Percentage	1950-55 (average)	5.0	12.3	1964-65	13.5	20.7
7. Gross Manufacturing Production	Rs. Million (at 1959-60 prices)	1949-50	472	961	1964-65	1536	2904
8. Production of Principal Food Crops	Thousand Tons	1955-56 to (1959-60 average)	20,455	22,156	1968-69	24,156	25,606
9. Exports	Rs. Million	1949-50	628.8	565.1	1967-68	1484.1	1864.1
10. Inter-Wing Exports	"	"	32.3	229.2	"	779.0	1216.0
11. Rail Net Freight Ton Miles	Million	1949-50	655	1807	1967-68	806	5237
12. Road Mileage (High Type)	Miles	1954-55	320	7980	"	2271	10,459
13. Electricity	Thousand kwt	1949	13,657	150,845	1964	4,67,176	2,948,002

Source: Data Compiled at the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi, from publication of the Government of Pakistan.

# Global dimensions

RAJESHWAR DAYAL

THE birth of Bangla Desh is the most earth-shaking event in Asia since the liberation of India from the colonial yoke and the victory of Maoist arms in China. From the recent convulsions has emerged the eighth largest State in the world, one with the second largest Muslim population. This profound change in political geography will completely alter the factors of power in South Asia whose ripples will inevitably be felt far and wide.

The coming into existence of the sovereign State of Bangla Desh is much more than the addition of a new country to the map of the world. It is a vindication of a people's overwhelming urge for freedom against the brutal votaries of force; it is an affirmation of the right of the downtrodden to rise against their oppressors; it is a demonstration of the invincibility of right over might. It will awaken hope in those not yet free that the day of redemption, though delayed, will not be indefinitely denied.

The exploited people of Bangla Desh were as harshly treated by their Pakistani overlords as are the black Africans by the minority white rulers of

South, Africa and Southern Rhodesia. In all these countries the majority has been treated as a subjugated colonial people. Bangla Desh has shown the path of liberation, thus kindling fresh hope in African hearts.

Today, Bangla Desh is an independent political entity, a land of rice, jute and tea and of considerable untapped natural and human resources. Its seventy five million people are industrious, intelligent and imaginative. They have a high degree of political consciousness, and they have been welded into a nation by the blood of their sacrifices. When the wounds are healed, Bangla Desh will become a significant political and economic factor in the international community. But, this will depend upon the degree to which the people can sustain the fervour which inspired their struggle for liberation.

The impact of Bangla Desh will be felt most strongly at the epicentre of the storm in South Asia. Here, many myths and illusions will be irrevocably shattered. The myth of an artificial parity between India and Pakistan and of Pakistan's inflated pretensions—on the borrow-



ed strength of American and Chinese arms—is among the first casualties of war. The myth of the discredited 'two-nation theory' is another. That of the fighting qualities of the so called martial races of West Pakistan is a third. Gone also is the illusion of the supposed weakness of a democracy—however talkative—when pitted against the most fanatical of dictatorships.

The wonder is not that Pakistan—the State that never was, as the *New Statesman* describes it—crumpled up in a fortnight, but that it endured for twenty four years. Based on a fiction, that religion determines nationality, with an impossible geography unique in the history of the world, with no soul or body to connect its severed wings, it managed to survive despite the weight of its inner contradictions. Now Pakistan has been reduced to a rump and it must face up to the realities of its shrunken size.

**P**akistan's disintegration compels a radical revision of theories regarding the role of religion as a political force in the modern world. Supporters of the concept of Pakistan, in disregard of its inherent weaknesses, thought that Islam could be built up into a strong political bulwark against the influence of communism and of doctrines which they regard as subversive. Indeed, some went so far as to imagine the creation of Pakistan as a revival of the faded glories of the Arab and Ottoman empires. Pakistan itself began to suffer from delusions of grandeur, which were heightened by the adulation paid to it by many Islamic States. It came to be regarded as the apex of Islamic power, a position that was never accorded to Indonesia, a country of greater extent and Muslim population, but which took less pride in its religious orthodoxy.

To believe that any religion necessarily offers a barrier to the spread of communism or

socialism, is to disregard the lessons of history. No country was more orthodox in its religious zeal than Czarist Russia or the Muslim Kingdom of Albania. Besides, the egalitarianism of Islamic society where the faithful belong to one fraternity, where the Sheikh can sit at the same table as his servant, gave Islam a strong social thrust and political cohesion at the time of its ascendancy. That was not unlike the impact of communism in the present century on a social and economic order riddled with injustices and corruption.

The more enlightened among the Muslim States had themselves realised that in the twentieth century, a difference must be made between things religious and secular. Nasser banned the Muslim Brotherhood and tried to build a modern secular State. The separation of religion from politics was one of the great contributions of Kamal Ataturk. But Pakistan proved unable to find a national ethos, except in terms of the most narrow religious fanaticism.

The frantic cries of *jehad* heard over Pakistan radio during the recent conflict were more reminiscent of the days of Muhammad Bin Qasim or Mahmud Ghaznavi than of the latter part of the twentieth century. If a warning is taken from Pakistan's debacle by West Asian States that mediaeval slogans and ideas are irrelevant in the present-day world, there may yet be an opportunity for the regeneration of their backward peoples.

**B**ut, it was not the Muslim countries alone which misread the impact of the struggle for an independent Bangla Desh. The United States Government, still clinging to the false doctrines of the Dullesian era, and ignoring its own historical traditions, cast its awkward weight against the tide, only to find its policies swept away by the inexorable urge of a nation for

freedom. The impact of an independent Bangla Desh has swept away the fallacious theories of fashioning an artificial balance of power on the sub-continent between two unequal States. The hard fact of India's size, stability and geography cannot now be ignored as a vital factor in the politics of the Indian Ocean area, of Asia and, indeed, of the world.

**T**he irony of a great democracy like the United States fervently backing a brutal military dictatorship engaged in trying vainly to suppress an entire nation has not been lost on American and world public opinion. It should also serve as a warning to dictators and military cliques everywhere that however repressive a regime, the spirit of freedom must ultimately prevail.

No less egregious than Washington's policy, has been that of Peking, both capitals finding themselves backing the losing side for somewhat parallel reasons and in violation of their own proclaimed principles. China, the champion of the 'people's liberation struggles' throughout the world, ranged itself against the liberation struggle of the people of Bangla Desh. While it calls for 'national self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir', it has denied that same right to the people of Bangla Desh. Adversity, indeed, finds strange bed-fellows.

In the triangular tussle between the super powers for world influence, the Soviet Union has scored a deserved victory against its rivals. The growth of Soviet prestige in the area is in more than direct proportion to the loss of faith in American credibility and good sense. The competition between the super powers for influence in South Asia has been decided unmistakably by America's own behaviour.

South East Asia tended to regard India as a flabby giant

whose potential influence in the region, based on cultural and sentimental affinities, was largely neutralised by Pakistan. The small States of the area indeed have a difficult choice of friendships in Asia, China by fear as a political and ideological threat, and Japan as an economic octopus, as it still evokes memories of the disreputable slogan of a 'greater East Asian co-prosperity sphere'. In either case, the small States face strangulation. Their alliance with the United States has only brought domination of a military and cultural variety. And the South East Asia Treaty Organisation, that mythical alliance, has created neither strength nor security. Now, with Pakistan's defeat, it lies buried beyond recall.

India now has a great opportunity to befriend the small independent States of South East Asia who complain bitterly of past Indian neglect and indifference. They know that India has no economic or political expansionist aims in the area and if they have any doubts about the disinterested nature of Indian friendship, the example of the unconditional assistance afforded to Bangla Desh in its birth pangs, should suffice to reassure them. Here is an opportunity for India and Bangla Desh to join hands with the South East Asian States to strengthen their sense of security and accelerate their progress.

For too long have the States of South East Asia been pawns in the power politics of great powers. The impact of Bangla Desh should give them a new sense of regional identity and free them from extra-continental shackles. The impotence of the Seventh Fleet to alter the situation in Bangla Desh is proof enough that in the modern age the possession of seemingly overwhelming military force is ineffective in achieving hoped-for political results. The greatest security of a country,

however small or poor, lies in the determination of its people to uphold its sovereignty and independence against foreign encroachment. The struggle of North Vietnam is a shining example.

The impact of Bangla Desh on Europe has been demonstrated by the policies of Britain and France which reflect Europe's new mood of self-reliance and of independent judgment. Britain, particularly, has also been inspired by the very practical consideration of its investments in Bangla Desh and of its future trading potential. The facts of power in the Indian Ocean area have at last received belated recognition.

A sovereign Bangla Desh is soon likely to take its place as a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. It will be the second largest in terms of population and like India, is one of the few that has fought for and won its independence by sacrifice. India and Bangla Desh, in combination, could operate with authority on behalf of the Indian Ocean area. India's close association, in terms of sovereign equality, with a large Muslim State, would strengthen the forces of secularism in the counsels of the Commonwealth and rid them of hangovers of the colonial era. Pakistan's voice may not be less strident, but it will fall on muted ears. A focus of neo-colonialism that Dacca represented in the past, will be removed from South Asia, strengthening the equality of members of the Commonwealth.

Bangla Desh will be a significant addition to the forces of non-alignment which have been weakened of late, and give them a fresh impetus. The Afro-Asian movement similarly atrophied, will be encouraged to move out of its narrow rut into broader spheres of activity. The example of a State which is ready to forswear national hatred of its erstwhile oppressor could draw the policies of the

Afro-Asian movement away from their negativism into constructive channels.

The States of Latin America, frequently the objects of gun-boat diplomacy and super power pressure, will have noted the successful resistance of Bangla Desh to their methods. They have an opportunity of developing a useful trade in jute with the new State and to strengthen their relations with both India and Bangla Desh. The initiative taken by the Indian Prime Minister in 1968 in touring Latin America has not been followed up purposefully and it could again be revived in partnership with Bangla Desh. The States of Latin America are secular in outlook, and some like Chile and Mexico are moving towards socialism. The common bonds and interests with these countries should be expanded and enlarged. They are a significant political force especially at the United Nations and have a great economic potential.

The successful struggle of Bangla Desh is one of the rare examples in recent history of a nation within a State freeing itself by force of arms from the tyranny of a minority. The union between Egypt and Syria, conceived in haste, was dissolved at leisure. That between Senegal and Mali was still-born. Bangla Desh has shown that the hastily contrived post-war boundaries of States which forced disparate ethnic and cultural groups into unnatural unions, cannot indefinitely endure.

Bangla Desh is not the only area in the contemporary world where a distinct ethnic and cultural group has been downtrodden by a minority. Africa is full of new States with boundaries which cut across ethnic and geographical areas and which conform only to the administrative divisions of the colonial era. The struggle of the Ibos in Nigeria is of recent memory. True, the movement

was crushed by force of arms, but the bitterness lingers. Unless the Ibos are able to lead their own lives in a loose federation, discontent will continue to smoulder, possibly leading to a fresh outburst. There are also many divided ethnic groups elsewhere in Africa such as the Abako of the Republic of Zaire (formerly Congo) who are spread over their territories. The problem of the Somalis remains dormant but as yet unresolved. Islamabad's treatment of Bangla Desh should serve as a warning as to how genuine ethnic grievances should not be tackled. If Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's six points had been conceded, the story of Bangla Desh might have been different. The Organization of African Unity would do well to study the ethnic problems of the continent before they flare up into unmanageable proportions.

Latin America too has its ethnic problems although they have been clouded over by the more articulate, dominant races. In the mountain republics of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, the indigenous inhabitants outnumber those of European origin. In other Republics they constitute a sizeable minority. Yet in many Latin American States, the indigenous people remain backward and enjoy few rights. There may not be racial discrimination against them in the accepted connotation of the term, but they remain neglected and exploited. In some parts of Latin America, rumblings of discontent can already be heard. The problem is not one that can indefinitely be shelved, and the Organization of American States should not turn a blind eye towards it. The revolutionary implications of Bangla Desh are of such moment that they cannot be disregarded with impunity by States with significant ethnic communities in their midst.

Canada has an explosive problem with its French-speaking population which it is at-

tempting to defuse by adopting a definite policy of giving the minority a sense of participation in national affairs. The situation in Ulster shows that a religious minority cannot be suppressed by force and must receive a fair deal. Bangla Desh must compel a new approach to the problem of ethnic groups within a nation which feel a genuine sense of grievance and exploitation.

The achievement of independence by Bangla Desh was fully in accordance with the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter; yet the Organisation was ranged in opposition to the just aspirations of its people. That was the measure of its departure from its aims and purposes and its consequent ineffectiveness. Now, the United Nations must accept the accomplished fact, but only when its members decide to accord recognition to the new State. Bangla Desh already fulfils the required conditions and more—it has defined territorial limits, it has an effective government and administration, a coherent population which stands solidly behind its government, a proclaimed domestic and foreign policy and a viable economy.

If divided States like the two Germanys, Vietnams and Koreas are to be admitted to the United Nations, it would be absurd to keep Bangla Desh out. Bangla Desh's claim to legitimacy is based on its successful struggle for independence. The divided States are the result of post-war differences between the Great Powers, and their governments were initially imposed by the rival powers. Bangla Desh has, from the start, its own freely-elected government which has declared the sovereignty and independence of the State and which it is determined to uphold.

The impact of Bangla Desh on the Indian Ocean area will be immediate. The peace of the region and India's security will no longer be recurrently threatened by a militant Pakistan.

Islamabad will not readily abandon its irredentism, but its threats will be no more than empty sound and impotent fury. On the eastern border, India will for the first time since independence, have a friendly State. A cooperative relationship with Bangla Desh based on mutual respect and interest could provide an example to other States in the region. It is not wholly inconceivable that, in course of time, Pakistan may find it to its advantage to abandon its intransigence and pursue less bellicose policies. If traditional enemies like France and Germany can develop friendly ties, one can only hope that a chastened Pakistan will decide not to swim indefinitely against the tide.

On India, great new responsibilities devolve with the appearance of Bangla Desh on the political firmament. The capacity of the Great Powers to interfere in the affairs of the region, and to play off the sub-continental powers against each other, has been greatly diminished. The security of the Indian Ocean area has been strengthened, and it could become a real area of peace. India's foreign policy is now freed from the restraints and distortions imposed on it by Pakistan hostility. There is today a strong foundation for a truly independent foreign policy based upon basic national interests and the interests of the region.

In victory, the mood in India is one of magnanimity and of self-reliance. A greater awareness of our neighbours in South and South East Asia will contribute greatly to the peace and prosperity of the region as well as our own. India's role in international affairs, diminished after 1962, could again be a significant factor in the promotion of world peace and cooperation. The perspectives are vastly enlarged and new vistas are rapidly unfolding. A triumphant leadership backed by an awakened people must march forward boldly into the future that hopefully beckons.

# Our security scenario

ROMESH THAPAR

THE critical fact that Pakistan is today half the State it was, must inevitably mould political and diplomatic thinking within the region and outside. Much of the debate which takes place today about the Pakistani capacity to mount new threats, in collusion with China, or the USA, fails to take this fact into full consideration. We tend to be obsessed by the security dimensions of the past. This mood will pass, hopefully, and

then India will begin to appreciate the qualitative change which has occurred in South Asia.

A rapid summary of the international scene will bear out this qualitative change in the background against which our security system has to be planned.

A major development is the sustained effort of President

Nixon to arrange a *detente* with Chairman Mao. Increasingly, this aspect of US foreign policy influences all other initiatives emanating from Washington. How far China will go to accommodate the USA remains to be seen, but if her present psychopathic fear of Soviet power is any indication, the honeymoon should be of considerable duration. China obviously views the Pakistani debacle in Bangla Desh as a significant setback to her interests, for the new-found credibility of India, as seen from Peking, strengthens a Soviet-backed countervailing force against China in South Asia. After all, the Tibetan border is 6000 miles from Peking and the Indian army is not the bedraggled division-and-a-half of 1962. The Chinese are realists and know that no easy victories, cease-fire and withdrawals are possible in the seventies.

The USA, or at least that portion of it which thinks within the equation of Nixon and Kissinger, revealed its perspectives in the course of the recent liberation of Bangla Desh. Pakistan is seen as the only base in South Asia to challenge the new Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean. Economically, it is very viable. Politically, it will settle down. Given time, it could become the anchor of the Islamic world in South Asia. In other words, the further break-up of Pakistan is not inevitable.

A quite different view emerges from Moscow. The USSR is now at last interested in Indian credibility in South Asia. With the USA and China moving into a *detente* situation, the countries in South and South-East Asia, view the future with a certain measure of apprehension. The Soviet Union would like to see India play a prominent anti-US role in the region, which would be indirectly aimed at Chinese influence. The recent change in the attitude of India to Hanoi

is an interesting pointer. Indian credibility, diplomatic and military, is a source of strength to the USSR in its complex dealings with Maoism. In other words, unlike the involvement in the Arab world, Moscow-India relations provide a two-way system of cooperation and collaboration. This is a healthy backdrop for the Indo-Soviet Treaty and can help neutralise the natural propensity of a super power to exploit its relationship with a weaker partner.

For the first time, the European Community and Japan watch the changes taking place with a strong desire to re-open their options on several issues. In many ways, these industrially powerful regions are of vital concern to the manipulations of the super powers. The carefully worked out plans and scenarios under scrutiny in various leading capitals can be thrown into confusion by unexpected postures on the part of Europe and Japan. Both seek freedom of manoeuvre and refuse to be taken for granted. Both can swing the odds against this or that super power and its allies. Both will be wooed. And both will take decisions on the basis of hard practical advantage.

Any analysis of international alignments today must take into account which of the two super power systems offers the possibilities of equal trade and mutually beneficial development. It is no longer a situation where the confrontation is between ideologically opposed blocs: there is a mixture of ideologies in both blocs and in the uncommitted areas. All this makes for the assertion of national interests or regional interests.

This is the canvas against which India will plan her security in the seventies. Again, Pakistan and China will provide the key to the planning. Let us look at the situation as it now unfolds.

Pakistan, half its size, cannot hope to build any military

threat against India without massive external assistance. Loose talk about 'another Israel' only serves to illustrate the total lack of information on the internal roots of the Israeli posture against the flabby Arabs and the kind of military support provided to that posture by external agencies. To become a *gendarme* of either the USA or China, Pakistan would once again risk its internal coherence. Military power would inevitably concentrate in the heartlands of the Punjab and spark old, internal hostilities among the Pathans and the Baluchis. Bangla Desh is a dramatic precedent, capable of emulation. In pursuing the path of revanchism against India, Pakistan would be embarked on a self-destroying mission.

China is in a position somewhat different to Pakistan but, in military terms, rather hedged in. Her vast border with the Soviet Union demands the permanent deployment of millions of men. And, now, India in the South can no longer be bullied. Estimates put the present strength of the Indian Army in the Himalayas at 10 mountain divisions, highly trained and equipped with the latest destructive power. To speak from a position of strength, China would have to nearly double her existing garrison of some 13 divisions in Tibet and keep them serviced at the end of a rather frail 6000-mile supply line. A military miscalculation by China would damage her prestige rather severely throughout the world. Peking would rather trade on her so-called victory of 1962.

Of course, the protagonists for a nuclear programme will argue that all these calculations change the moment China possesses the capacity to obliterate a major city in either the USA or the USSR. Then, it is argued, China can blackmail her underdeveloped neighbours, knowing

that the super powers will not risk their cities for some far-off, expendable communities. These calculations overlook a host of other factors which persuade nations to enter wars even though not directly threatened. That is how local wars become world wars. And it would also be naive to imagine that nuclear capacities will remain confined to a few nations during the decade we are entered upon.

**T**he Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, originally proposed by the USSR two years ago when its border troubles were escalating with China and Maoism was beginning a *detente* with its traditional enemies and flexing its muscles for confrontations within the communist system, was finally pushed by the Indian leadership. This was at the end of 1971 when it appeared as if Pakistan was to be given a US and China-backed leverage to pressurise and paralyse the sub-continent into accepting a shattering refugee burden. The compact as such was merely a confirmation of the natural friendship between India and the Soviet Union whose interests did not conflict, but the very logic of the compact brought India into the game of power. From now on it would be necessary to seek out spheres of influence, to outflank and corner potential adversaries, and to build the kind of political and diplomatic thrust which tastes of major power status.

The political and military developments over Bangla Desh have speedily crystallised a new balance of power and heightened India's relevance in South Asia. Delhi's decision, for example, suddenly to recognise the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam in Hanoi marks the start of a new and active phase in regional diplomacy. It may appear, on the surface, to be a slap in the face of the USA now busy again bombing North Viet Nam after delivering homilies on peace to the GOI. The more perceptive will see it as an action designed to contrast sharp-

ly with the opportunist silence of Peking. Hanoi has responded more than warmly, and it would not be out of context to expect many such initiatives in the region.

There is nothing Kautlyan about these developments. We are now compact-bound to support causes which are mutually beneficial to the interests of both the USSR and India. It is equally clear that despite all previous attempts to keep our options open, Indo-Soviet diplomacy will demarcate Chinese threats, singly or in alliance, and neutralise them in such a way that Peking stands exposed as an unprincipled operator, and not as the charismatic ideological force that it seeks to appear as. Many interesting scenarios can emerge from this diplomatic play.

In Europe, and in Japan, we are today witnessing an extraordinary euphoria about China and the pristine quality of Maoism. The mass media, irrespective of ownership and control, are in many ways feeding this euphoria which reflects in passing the almost naive US discovery of communist China. The fear of Russia, the anger against those who, like India, side with the Kremlin, the satisfaction over China's successful attempts to crack and splinter the rigid, heirarchical, international communist movement, and the developing *detente* between the USA and China which will, it is hoped, isolate the Soviet Union, provide the motives behind current diplomatic thinking. In other words, China is seen as the giant that will change the balance of world power. But will it? A series of trends are developing which refuse to be subverted to serve these ends.

**T**hese trends are based on the economic realities prevailing in the world. If Europe as a continent sees itself capable of striking an independent path in economic relations with the rest of the international community, and particularly the developing

world which is suspicious of US aid, how much more susceptible is Japan to pulls which would detach it from the pressures of Washington. The hard-headed industrial managers in Japan, who live by importing raw materials and exporting finished goods at highly competitive prices, cannot but be attracted by the opportunity to exploit the riches of Siberia and to market both capital and consumer goods through the sprawling spaces of an increasingly prosperous USSR. Under-developed China offers no such prospects for at least another twenty or thirty years, for she is concerned only with acquiring vital higher technology from the USA during an uncertain *detente*.

**T**he euphoria about China cannot last. When everyone bounces back to reality, a very much more complex system of power balance will prevail in each region of the world. The rigid models of communist and capitalist orthodoxy are no longer relevant. The new models have not been formulated. Until they are, we will seem to be drifting into all manner of confused and contradictory positions—but only for a while, for after Nixon and Mao have had their first parleys the descent to reality will begin.

In this situation, India is in a critical position. Her effectiveness, both as interventionist in international politics and as a sovereign power capable of defending herself, will depend largely on the skill with which the internal situation is handled—at the political level and at the economic. For 25 years we have lived on the belief that our country is large enough to ensure that friendly aid and assistance can be received from all and sundry. Some of these day dreams have been shattered. But, we have still to gear ourselves to an independent power role—yes, independent even, if need be, of our present friends. When we begin to act on this consciousness, the full dimensions of the challenge will take shape.

# Books

**REVOLT IN EAST BENGAL** by R. K. Dasgupta,  
Calcutta, 1971. Pp. 175.

Starting with the assumption that the Muslims of East Bengal are the descendants of Hindus who were converted to Islam by the Muslim conquerors of Bengal in the thirteenth century, Dr. Dasgupta points out that until the rise of the British power in India, the Muslims of Bengal lived in harmony with the Hindus, made important contribution to Bengali literature, and had a sufficiently reasonable share in the administration of the province. After the Permanent Settlement of 1793, however, the situation changed and the Muslims found it extremely difficult to compete with the Hindus. This situation provided the basis for the rise of the Wahabi Movement which aimed at the restoration of orthodox Islam and at isolating the Bengali Muslims from the English system of education. But the Wahabi Movement could not achieve the desired results because of the absence of a Muslim intellectual elite. Although there was a development of the feeling against the domination of the "Bengali of Hindus", the educated upper middle class Muslims were reluctant to surrender their privileges without which the Wahabi Movement could not be successful. Dr. Dasgupta's view is that till 1918 there was hardly any minority complex among the Muslim intellectuals of Bengal. It was in 1918, the author believes, that the Wahabi spirit of the nineteenth century became a factor in Muslim politics in Bengal and gave rise to a communal approach in politics. In 1947 the educated Muslims of East Bengal thought that the creation of Pakistan would assure them both political power and professional opportunities. But their hopes were belied when the new State of Pakistan dominated by the ruling elite of West Pakistan Muslims started making systematic efforts to keep the Bengali language and literature in a subordinate position for ever. This disillusionment of the East Bengalis engendered among them a new outlook which was modern, secular, and humanist on the one hand, and encouraged them to fight

for their liberation from West Pakistani domination on the other.

It was, however, not merely in the field of language and literature that East Pakistanis felt neglected by the Central Government of Pakistan. It was so in the economic and political sphere too. Thus the people of East Pakistan realized in the famine of 1948 that the rulers of Pakistan were not the least concerned with their economic distress. Dr. Dasgupta tells the story of the planned way in which the West Pakistani rulers perpetrated economic inequality and injustices on East Bengalis and suggests that the economic reasons were also important in the revolt in East Bengal. He builds up quite a convincing case in support of his contention on the basis of relevant facts and statistics.

While discussing the political aspect, the author emphasizes that the real trouble arose from the fact that while the Lahore Resolution on the creation of Pakistan unequivocally defined the proposed State of Pakistan as essentially a confederation in which the constituent units would be autonomous and sovereign, this resolution was not honoured in so far as the autonomy of East Pakistan was concerned. This provided another basis for the East Bengalis to fight against the rulers of West Pakistan. The most important observation made by Dr. Dasgupta in this connection is that the idea of one unit of West Pakistan was mooted specifically with a view to ensuring a united confrontation with East Bengal. He highlights the main political developments that led to the widening of the gulf between East Pakistan and West Pakistan. He examines the whole gamut of relationship between these two wings and suggests that "it was not East Pakistan which cut off relations with West Pakistan but it was West Pakistan who threw away East Bengal".

The book is almost evenly divided between the text of the lectures and the appendices. The appendices include Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Six Point Programme, some of his important

broadcasts, and the election manifestoes of the Awami League. But the most interesting appendix is an autobiographical note by Mujib. Except for this note, the appendices cannot be found to be of much use now after the publication of a massive volume on the documents on Bangla Desh brought out by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Mahendra Kumar

## PAKISTAN: MILITARY RULE OR PEOPLE'S

**POWER?** by Tariq Ali, Vikas Publications in association with Jonathan Cape, London.

History lies in the eye of the beholder. Tariq Ali's account of Pakistan's last 25 years is a very personal one. It is, in his own words, 'an unabashed and straightforward polemic against the feudal and capitalist class of Pakistan which has ruled the country since 1947 in varying guises.' Conventional history books have never interested me, and Tariq's militant essay has convinced me of the virtue of an honest bias. At school, history has seemed to be a string of boring and meaningless wars, largely, I think, because the mealy-mouthed historians never properly identified the villains. This historian's dramatis personae are drawn in such colourful detail that we can easily identify the semi-fascists, the enemies of the people, the imperialists and their arse-lickers (Tariq's picturesque phrase, not mine).

Tariq Ali is a Pakistani and a Trotskyite. His passionate involvement with the land of his birth heightens his sense of perception and his Marxist upbringing gives his analysis a clinical depth. After busily stoking student fires in Western European capitals, Tariq Ali paid a long visit to Pakistan in 1969. He found certain similarities between the student revolt in Paris in May 1968 and the uprising in November in Pakistan. In both countries a strong man headed an oppressive system, differing only in degree, with the support of the military. Also, both de Gaulle and Ayub Khan had a 'Left' face in their attitude to Vietnam and China and had thus partly immobilised the Left in their respective countries. Orthodox opposition parties had little chance of providing a strong opposition. An extra-parliamentary opposition was therefore the only course open to the youth. The student revolts in Paris and in Karachi, Rawalpindi and Dacca obviously had a part to play in the departure of both de Gaulle and Ayub early in 1969.

Tariq Ali's concern for his youthful compatriots in Pakistan has resulted in this book, which is an indictment of the system and an open incitement to the revolutionary Left to overthrow the regime. This obvious intent in no way detracts from the value of the book as a serious study

of the politics of Pakistan. Reading it now, much of what he has said of East Bengal seems prophetic, (the book was first published in London in 1970). He quotes, for instance, a student leader of East Pakistan, Mahbubullah, who said: 'The objective conditions are very ripe... Our task is to denounce all collaboration with the regime. Even if the Chinese Government tells us that there is not a revolutionary situation we will disagree with them. We know there is a revolutionary situation and we will exploit it. We will not let our generation rot.' Tariq's sympathy throughout is with the ultra-revolutionaries. To him, Mujibur Rehman is a mere bourgeois nationalist, a 'Bengali Chiang Kai-shek', as he refers to him at one place.

'The origins of Pakistan date from almost immediately after the 1857 mutiny, when English administrators and military men openly pursued a policy of exploiting the divisions that existed between the Hindu and Muslim communities. By 1906, Lord Minto was pampering Muslim nobles and landowners (led by the Aga Khan) with special assurances that their class interests would be protected. The Muslim bourgeoisie, Tariq Ali points out, were attracted to the idea of a separate Muslim State because it meant a territory where there would be no Hindu commercial competition. 'Long live Pakistan' really meant 'Long live free enterprise'.

Tariq Ali says that Jinnah's death in 1948, just over a year after independence, deprived the Muslim League of the only leader who could have held it together. His illness prevented him from playing an active role in Pakistani politics, but on one thing Jinnah was quite clear: Pakistan should be a secular State. He had argued that there were no longer Muslims, Hindus or Christians in Pakistan, only Pakistanis, and there is, according to the author, evidence to suggest that he was thinking on these lines with regard to Pakistan's first Constitution. Once Jinnah was dead, the landowners who represented the largest grouping in the Muslim League National Council were unfettered. They used religion to exploit the peasant masses.

As for East Pakistan, which was linked with the western part only by the English language and Pakistan International Airlines, the West Pakistani feudal classes decided right from the time of Partition that its economic strength should be kept down. The Punjabi army elite continued the policy of the British in virtually excluding the Bengalis from the army. The same racial myths of the British were propagated in West Pakistan: the Bengalis were short and ugly; they were not a fighting people; they were cowards at heart.

The role of the United States in keeping the feudals in power is recounted with plenty of



sarcasm, Dulles acclaimed Pakistan as 'a bulwark of freedom in Asia'. As more and more aid arrived, the Pakistani rulers strengthened their own position in the country. The radical *Pakistan Times*, owned by Mian Iftikharuddin (at that time), was the lone voice against the growing involvement of the United States. Repeatedly the paper attacked American policies in Asia. The people of Pakistan will wonder, said the paper in an editorial in July, 1953, how to reconcile their cherished dreams of a democratic political and social order with such cruel realities of American life as racial discrimination and the lynching of Negroes, or with such concrete expressions of American foreign policy as the support for Chiang Kai-shek and Syngman Rhee and the domination of the Middle Eastern economies.

Tariq Ali frequently quotes the *Pakistan Times* which, before it was taken over by Ayub's Martial Law administrators, was the spokesman of the Left. The role of this newspaper in those early years and the influence it wielded among the progressive sections of the public is a reminder to us in India that there still probably exists a considerable left-wing element in Pakistan with whom Indian intellectuals and politicians might find common ground on important issues. It would be wise of us not to make too much of the silence of Pakistani intellectuals on Bangla Desh. After all, we imprisoned D. F. Karaka for a rather innocuous piece he wrote. The fate of Pakistani dissidents in Karachi or Lahore might have been infinitely more serious.

Abu Abraham

**THE FULCRUM OF ASIA** by Bhabani Sen Gupta,  
Pegasus, New York, 1970.

The central theme of Sen Gupta's well-written book is the ideological and power conflict between China and the Soviet Union over the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. In his account of the political and strategic manoeuvres of the powers concerned, the author has preserved an important perspective on internal developments as mediating factors in their foreign relations. But at the outset, a rather severe premise is set out and developed: in the escalation of the Sino-Soviet conflict, India and the Indian question occupy a central place. 'Thrice during the last eight years, India has provided the ballistic for a marked escalation of the Sino-Soviet conflict... For political purposes the Sino-Soviet frontier has merged with the Sino-Indian border.' Despite the cogency of his argument, the enormity of this suggestion merits attention.

It is true that India has been an abrasive factor in relations between China and the U.S.S.R. But it is two entirely different things to maintain that India was a cause of Sino-Soviet conflict,

and that the Indian issue provided the scenario for a clash of views. It is qualitatively a thing apart to suggest that Sino-Soviet relations cooled because of divergent attitudes towards India; and to maintain that India was important because she determined whether Chinese communism would hold sway over most of Asia. Clearly, there is a temporal distinction here: the Soviets would only be perturbed about India going Maoist if the socialist camp lay already sundered. Sen Gupta might have elucidated this distinction—for, although he does recognise the ideological and power factors which played a part in Peking's edging away from Moscow, he comes close to overstressing the Indian question and substituting it for the former. India was *not* the motive for escalation; though it is interesting to learn that she was the occasion of three high-points in Sino-Soviet tension.

The leitmotif of Sen Gupta's first chapter is that Soviet diplomacy, from the early '50's, was dominated by twin considerations of a desire to contain China and to pre-empt American influence. In his next chapter, he traces the course of the Soviet academic debate on India since 1947. The years 1948-52 emerge as a decisive period in the Soviet Union's search for a policy towards the new nations in Asia. This quest was later to be given a sharp edge by the formulation of a Maoist alternative. The choice was—should Moscow 'legitimate the diversity of communist strategy?'—or should she insist on unquestioning obeisance to her writ, with the kind of unfortunate consequences which Stalin's opportunist direction of CPI strategy had led to?

For a brief period in 1949, it seemed possible that Soviet and Maoist strategy for the colonies and semi-colonies, would fuse. But they stayed delicately apart, and by 1956, the Soviet 'soft' attitude towards India had begun to harden into the shape of a doctrine, just when Chinese sensitivity over Tibet had frozen her own buoyant relationship with India. The evolution of both standpoints is lucidly handled.

On the Soviet side, initial reservations about befriending Nehru's government were overcome by a concrete appraisal of the effects of his foreign policy. Nehru's proposals for a settlement of the Korean War at the Security Council, with China sitting as a permanent member, was seen as progressive. But it was Krushchov's wholesale denunciation of Stalin which gave Soviet diplomatic manoeuvres an enlarged scope and enabled him to formulate an attitude which was given concrete shape at the 20th Congress.

A few important questions arise. Was Krushchov's policy of Indian friendship consistent with the Soviet academic reading of whether India was truly a progressive, anti-imperialist State? In other words, did Soviet policy proceed in accordance with what was mooted as a correct

ideological line?—or was it contemplated merely in the interests of the Soviet Union? It appears as if Kuusinen's remarks at the 20th Congress tried to impart a certain consistency to Soviet foreign policy, but Sen Gupta indicates that a certain lowering of her ideological sights is evident in later years. By 1962, with increasing vehemence, Soviet experts agreed that India 'had gone a long way towards capitalism and no longer qualified for non-capitalist growth'. In later years, after Nehru's death, India did not even qualify for the loosely formulated status of a 'National Democratic State'. Clearly, then, Soviet diplomacy was not ideological, but was directed against rival positions—in this case, China or the U.S.

In his third chapter, the author sketches the attitudes which governed the Indian and Chinese stance on the 'liberation' of Tibet and the border incidents. The Chinese government, whether it was Nationalist or Communist, had an historical claim to Tibet. But what made a confrontation between India and China inevitable was 'the strategic outlook of the British Empire' which the Indian leaders had inherited and were not objective enough to foreswear. This is a standard 'non-nationalist' viewpoint. But what makes Sen Gupta's interpretation particularly neat is the way he has shown the Indian stand to rest on a strictly legalistic conception of the boundary question.

The Chinese, in contrast, were desirous of a 'political' frontier which would be negotiable once the boundaries of 'imperialism' had been disavowed by both sides. The border treaties that China had signed with Burma, Nepal, Mongolia, Afghanistan and Pakistan had all been concluded in this fashion. China and India clearly brought a conceptual misunderstanding to the conference table every time they met. But in addition, Nehru failed to gauge Chinese sensibilities over Tibet; and the Chinese in turn did not appreciate Nehru's desire to remain crested on a nationalistic wave. Soviet support for India, with all the bitter recriminations from China which followed, is given full treatment in this chapter.

Sen Gupta's account of Pakistan's growing friendship with China, and the Soviet Union's efforts at getting in on the deal are equally succinct. Obviously, the Soviet Union was determined to prevent Pakistan falling completely into China's arms, even if it meant re-asserting an outward show of parity between India and Pakistan. Tashkent played a major part in publicising Russia's new image of the 'Honest Broker'.

What makes Sen Gupta's book particularly interesting are recent developments which he could not have foreseen and which, in a peculiar way, seem to grow out of his analysis and shape

it. The most important developments are in the nature of imponderables. On the one hand, Moscow appears to have switched positions with Peking and now voices its fears of Sino-US 'collusion'. On the other hand, there seems a more flexible Soviet acceptance of China's great-power status: since the Ussuri incidents, the Soviet leadership has opted for what it calls a 'normalisation of relations between States', a posture which allowed Brezhnev at the 24th Congress to invite China to take part in a conference of five nuclear powers. Since then, there has been a resumption of trade talks, and the editorial on the 50th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party represented a distinct muting of invective against the Soviet leadership. Do these developments presage a loosening of the axis of tension? It is too early to say, but for the moment, the three-cornered global strategic situation remains to vindicate the prognostications of 'The Fulcrum of Asia'.

Sen Gupta concludes his excellent study with the anatomy of nationalism and new nations. Quite rightly, he points out that international relations are too often viewed through a great-power prism, which ignores an important factor governing the actions of some participants—the psychology of small-nation nationalism. He comes interestingly close to formulating what is very nearly a Freudian concept of the nationalistic mentality. Among the factors at work in creating the overt nationalistic rationalisation are processes of identification, repression, denial and displacement. The outline of such a mentality is significant—unlike many Indian intellectuals who 'identify themselves with...the righteousness of all national causes', Sen Gupta has written a sturdy, dispassionate, well-researched book.

Pradip Krishen

#### THE RAPE OF BANGLA DESH by Anthony Mascarenhas, Vikas Publications.

The necessity for the partition of this sub-continent will always remain a subject of controversy. Most of the participants, including Lord Mountbatten, feel that it could have been averted. Surely, with the emergence of Bangla Desh, the 'Homeland for the Muslims' theory and therefore the 'raison d'être' of Pakistan seem to have disappeared.

Anthony Mascarenhas admits this and predicts for West Pakistan a growing unrest in Baluchistan and N.W.F.P. The question of separatist tendencies will depend on how the present crisis is handled. Since this book was written before the war, many of the predictions for the future have already become dated.

The Gas Chambers was Hitler's final solution of the Jewish problem. 'We are determined to

cleanse out East Pakistan once and for all of the threat of secession even if it means killing off 2 million people and ruling the province as a colony for 30 years'. This cleansing process was West Pakistan's final solution to the Bengali problem.

Twice in 30 years the world has acquiesced in allowing the deliberate extermination of a people, either for the sake of 'peace' or as now for a mythical 'realpolitik'. It is too easy to dismiss Hitler and Yahya as madmen bent on a demonic private mission against the wishes of the people. Who then are the real culprits in this genocide?

Mascarenhas' book is a follow-up of his 'Sunday Times' genocide story. In that he told of what he actually saw and the horrors that 'blew' his mind and made him decide to leave Pakistan with his family and tell the story of the Rape of Bangla Desh. This book fills in the political background to that story and the reasons, personalities and events that led to March 25th and later.

It was the first authentic report of what actually happened and the earlier parts of it read like a sort of Gunther's 'Inside Pakistan Today'.

From Independence to 1958 when General Ayub Khan took over the country, Pakistan has had eight Prime Ministers. Almost all had one thing in common: the supreme contempt in which they held Bengalis. Feroze Khan Noon called them 'half Muslims'. Liaquat Ali Khan insisted that only Urdu was the 'language of the Muslim Nation'. Equal partnership in the government of the country had been consistently denied to them. East Pakistan could never therefore take advantage of its superior political influence consistent with its numerically larger population.

The economic disparity between the two wings had also been increasing over the years and almost no efforts were made by the ruling clique to allow East Pakistanis to benefit from their share of the revenues and foreign exchange earned by them.

There is also the sordid history of political manipulations that led ultimately to the rise and fall of General Ayub Khan and, when he could not control the discontent in the country, to the ascent of General Yahya Khan to the *gaddi*.

The real reason behind General Yahya's initial promise of free elections and handing over power to the elected representatives and his subsequent 'volte face' are not adequately explained. Mascarenhas categorically states that Yahya had no intention of abdicating. But why then go through the farce of an election? It seems more likely that Yahya planned to hand over at least some power as a sop to the people, but he was not prepared to do this to a majority Bengali Assembly. He had miscalculated the extent of the Awami Party's possibilities (as had almost

everybody else) and he went back on his decision only after the election. Mascarenhas is also convinced that the decision was entirely that of General Yahya Khan. One wonders how much pressure was put on him, and by whom, and if there were any dissenting voices.

Sheikh Mujib is also considered naive and 'blind to reality' and unaware of the forces he had let loose. He failed his people by continuing to talk in spite of the fact that he knew the Pakistan army was moving into East Bengal and that East Bengal regiments were being disarmed and transferred and women and children were being sent back to West Pakistan. What action could he have taken? The Pakistan army was determined to sort out the Bengalis once and for all and Sheikh Mujib was in no position to challenge the military might of West Pakistan. One of the interesting 'ifs' of history is what would have happened if international pressure had made Yahya agree to a political solution of the problem? Mascarenhas feels that the alienation of the Bengalis was so total that no link with Pakistan was possible. What would Mujib have done under such circumstances?

Actions dictated by 'conscience' are slightly suspect these days. One is glad to see a genuine crisis of conscience resulting in a courageous decision to expose the barbarity and horror inflicted by one people on another.

Preminder Singh

**PAKISTAN CRISIS** by David Loshak, Heinemann, London.

Recent publications on Pakistan and the Bangla Desh crisis could be classified as under: (i) those which seek to explain the history of the factors that have led to the present crisis, (ii) those which attempt to raise the questions of international consciousness and international responsibility to help in resolving the crisis, and lastly (iii) those which describe the events and the tragedy as it unfolded itself in the sub-continent. In the last category, the greater emphasis is on describing the situation and the events rather than trying to underline the factors responsible for such events. The book under review essentially belongs to this category as the author admits in the preface: 'My main aim, however, has been to write for those who are interested in and concerned about *what* is going on in Pakistan (and not why).' It would have been a good document in this regard if the author had not concerned himself to explain with his limited knowledge the genesis of both 'Pakistan' and the 'Pakistan Crisis'.

To begin with, let us examine the shortcomings of the book. By and large, the author correctly summarises the events leading to the 'Partition of India' by the British Government

immediately after World War II. However, there is undue emphasis on superficial barriers in Hindu and Muslim culture. Nobody would deny that, as two distinct religions, both Hinduism and Islam are different but the fact of history of the last 6 or 7 centuries cannot be whisked away so easily. Hindus and Muslims have been living together and had evolved a common culture and value system. Thanks to the British policy of divide and rule, the two streams of life were compelled to have independent identities and the composite stream of Indian life was stifled. Secondly, the author completely ignores the role and contribution of nationalist Muslims in the struggle for independence and he also does not mention their general frustration when the Indian National Congress accepted the partition of the country. These factors are essential for a proper historical perspective to the problem.

The author exhibits a wonderful capacity for imagination. According to him PAKISTAN is composed of letters from the names of the Islamic homelands: Punjab, Afghanistan (i.e., the Northern Western Frontier region of old India), Kashmir; Iran, Sind, Turkharistan, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan. The letter 'N' does not signify any country. Maybe my knowledge of geography is rather poor. However I would wish to be enlightened about 'Turkharistan' and I also cannot understand how the North Western Frontier area of erstwhile India could be called 'Afghanistan'. The idea of Pakistan was first conceived by Dr. Mohammed Iqbal, the noted Urdu poet. This concept was crystallised by Chaudhury Rehmat Ali—a lawyer—who gave the concept the name 'Pakistan National Movement' to such a separate State of Pakistan comprising the Muslim majority area of Western India. It was at the Lahore session of the Indian Muslim League in March, 1940, that the Muslim majority areas of Bengal and Assam were also included in the proposed Pakistan.

Let us now turn to the crisis to which the author has directly addressed himself. He seems to be interested in studying the present problem of Pakistan, i.e., East Pakistan (Bangladesh) versus West Pakistan. The reviewer anticipated that the author would directly plunge himself into the problem of Pakistan's crisis and refer to Kashmir only as it becomes relevant to the issue, but he has preferred to do otherwise. According to him, Kashmir is not only crucial to Pakistan for its existence, but has also given the 'new nation a cause, . . . Kashmir became . . . the cornerstone and keystone of its foreign policy.' This is an uncalled for emphasis. The realities of the issues are that West Pakistan always treated East Pakistan not as its province but as its colony.

From this concept has flown all the other ills. An alien language was thrust on the Bengalis. Many other actions were instituted at the State

level which went against the interests of the East Pakistanis. However what amazes the reviewer is, how could such an exploitation be carried on when East Bengal had given Pakistan in the first decade of its existence two Prime Ministers (H. S. Suhrawardy and Mohmed Ali Bogra) and one Governor General. This aspect has not been touched in the book. The reader is rushed through to the arrival of 'unbenevolent dictatorship'. Beyond this, things become much simpler. With the army dictatorship and martial law administration at the helm of affairs, anything rational and democratic was unthinkable. During the period, rightly as the author points out, the exploitation of the Bengalis reached its peak. The situation was further aggravated by recurrent floods and very rapid population growth.

According to the reviewer, the basic problem with Pakistan has been the absence of democratic institutions and the non-participation of the public in political decision-making through their elected representatives. Except under Yahya, the country had never participated in a general election based on adult franchise. Before dictatorship, the political leadership did not help in evolving strong democratic institutions and, later on, the military junta was more eager to retain power. Here the author has been unduly harsh to India. He says, 'Parliamentary democracy in New Delhi was foundering into a sterile morass of politicking and rubber stampism, to say nothing of the way in which State politics had become so corrupted, and the open contempt displayed for the democratic process. . . . This was a poor augury and poorer example for Pakistan.'

Such perverse comments on strongly rooted democratic institutions reflect only the partisan attitude of the author. As a matter of fact, India has been hailed as the biggest democracy of the world with strong democratic traditions by the philosophers and friends of Pakistan, the U.K. and the U.S.A.

The chapters 5 through 19 are only newspaper accounts of the fast moving situation from one disaster to another, culminating in the creation of Bangla Desh. These chapters are largely a factual account of the events. However, a few of the important conclusions of the author do merit attention.

When all the foreign newspaper representatives were bundled out of Dacca and Pakistan, the Indian reporters were the sole, ostensibly uncommitted, source of what should have been authoritative news. According to the authors, they abdicated their role and made no attempt to be uncommitted. He feels that these reporters ignored all canons of responsible journalism, and did maximum possible harm to the Bangla Desh movement by misreporting it. This lesson should be learnt by our journalist friends. It is a good

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# Communications

The 'Problem' raised by Palit (SEMINAR 146, October 1971) is indeed of relevance but the views expressed are unfortunately extremely superficial. The whole picture appears to have been painted by a single colour of emotion and, as a result, the article embraces high-sounding words such as 'lower power status', 'international status' etc. I feel the author's vision of the face of reality is only partial when he scribbles '... even our internal problems such as those in Nagaland ... threats posed by extremists such as Naxalites ... if India aspires to deal with them as a Sovereign State we must develop a national potential commensurate with our size and population. ...' A panacea suggested by the author to reduce if not totally annihilate such actions is '... to develop credible military power. ...'

A student of logic, however, fails to assimilate such thoughts. The pathway suggested by the author to raise the nation to an international status is highly romantic rather than realistic. When the whole nation is shouldering a huge public debt (Rs. 14,422.55 crores of rupees for the year 1970-71) for years, to channelise the nation's economic and technological resources into piling up nuclear armaments will be throwing the whole economy of the country into jeopardy. Besides, the recent influx of millions of refugees made the country's sound existence very shaky. In these conditions, the views of Palit deserve a 'double-thought' before final acceptance. His suggestions to bring the country up to the level of the super powers by developing nuclear armaments are highly mythical.

Regarding the action of curbing the activities of Naxalites and other political extremists by military force, a fundamental question arises. Can we crush any social movement or the ideology of a group of people by sheer military force? Can all actions questioning the existing political or

social norms be kept hidden under the screen of terrorism.

My answer is in the negative to both the cases. The economic and social disparity and injustices which prevail in the present conditions are the root causes for the growth of such so-called anti-social actions. Only a suitable method which will reduce the gap between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' in all spheres—economic, social, etc., can function as an antidote for such movements. Military force is in no way an index of a nation's power, so long as the latter is dependent on others for the fulfilment of economic and industrial aspirations. No military force can defend the country from any mass movement; it can only help a nation to perish.

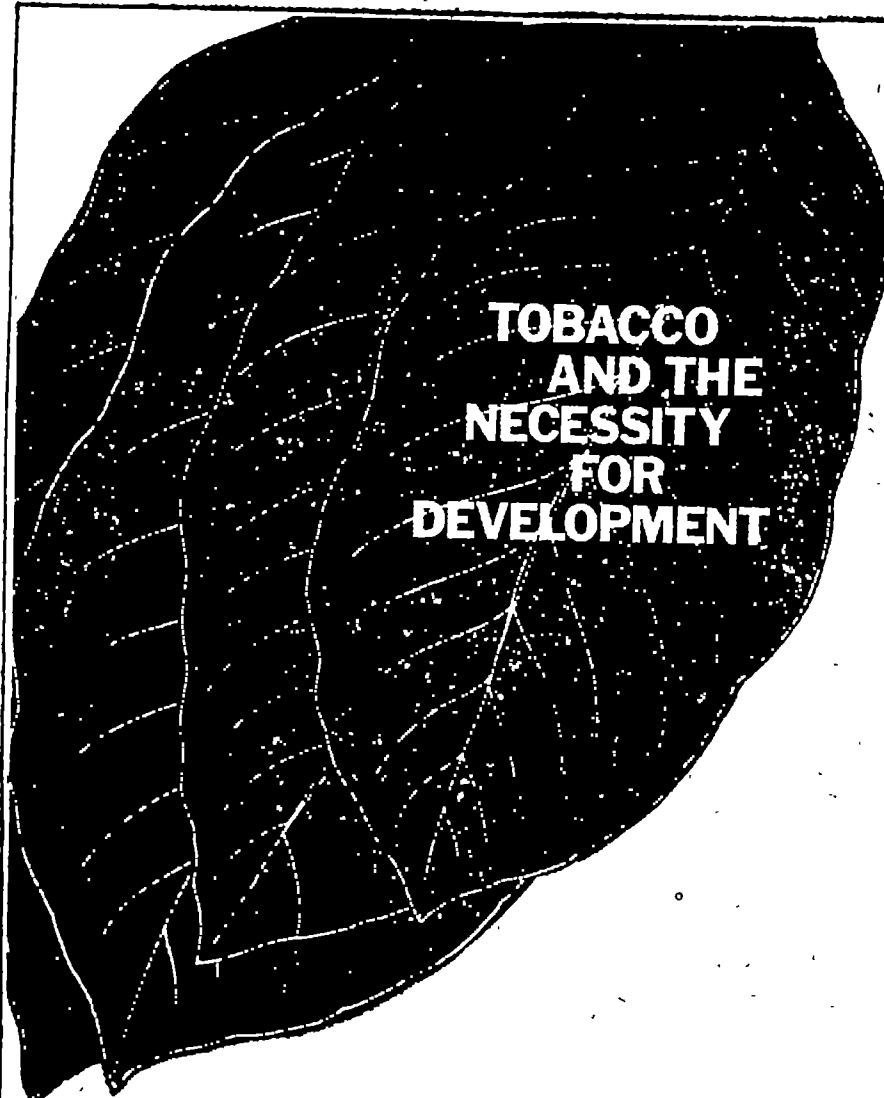
As Das Gupta appropriately points out, one feels like agreeing that the power of a country depends upon and is proportional 'to the intensity of integration of a people with the nation's goals and aspirations.' This we can aspire to only when we have an economically and socially classless mass.

**K.C.M. Raja**

Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore.

Kindly allow me to join issue with two of your learned contributors to your excellent Number 145, September 1971, on 'China Today' These are (a) Socio-Cultural Determinants (p. 21-25) by Krishna Prakash Gupta and (b) Security and Defence (Pp. 30-34) by G. D. Deshingkar, from the Department of Chinese and Japanese Studies, Delhi University.

Gupta, on page 25, column two, has stated his main thesis: As the changes in Chinese culture are achieved and Chinese people undergo modernist transformations, the present tone and content of Maoist

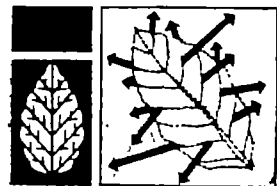


# TOBACCO AND THE NECESSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT

With the completion of the Nagarjunasagar Project, a large acreage of tobacco growing land will become suitable for food crops. However, this will affect production — and consequently our exports — of tobacco. Alternative areas for cultivation of tobacco must be developed, if possible in the more backward regions, where this important cash crop will help raise the income of farmers.

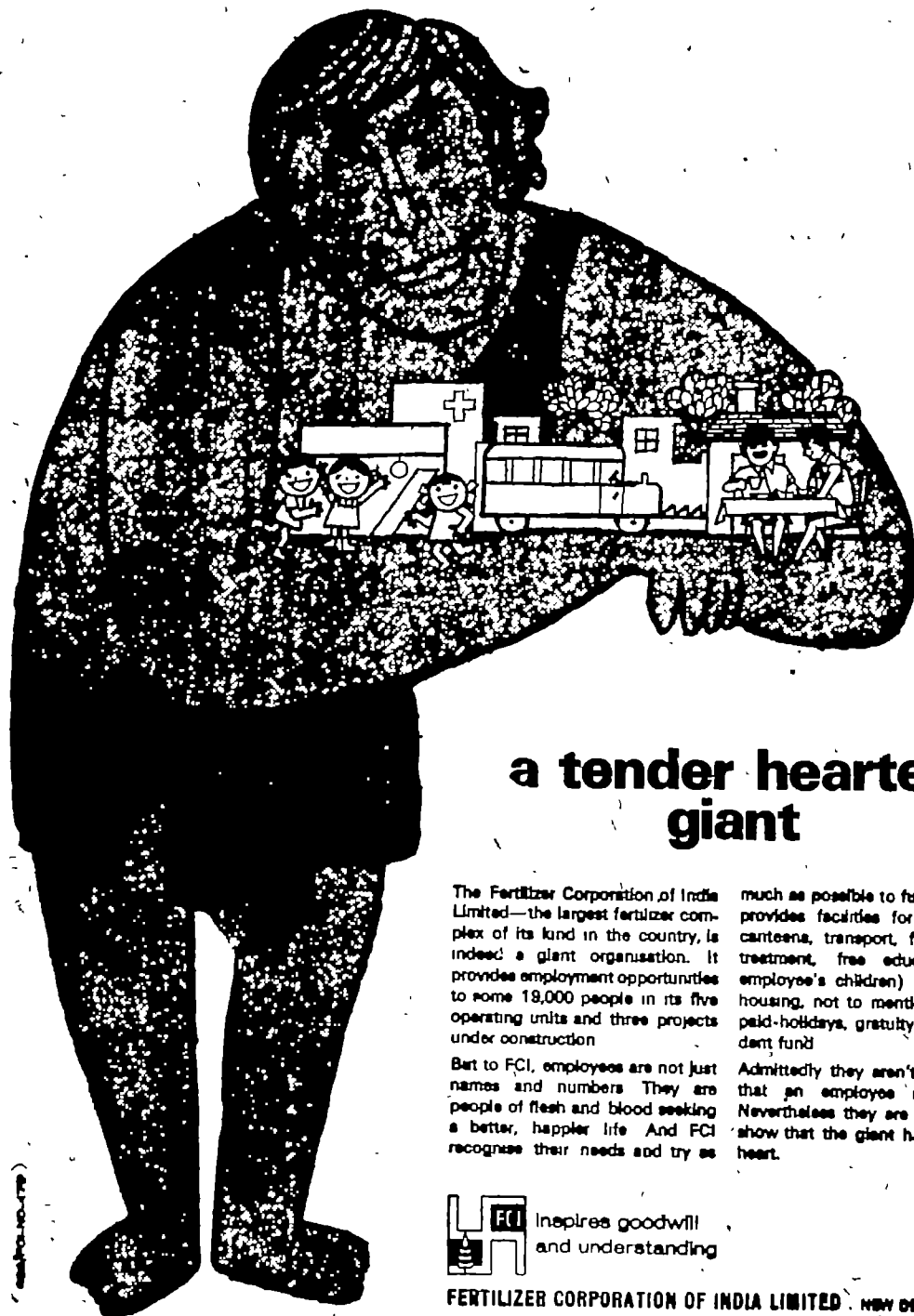
Enlightened management both in Indian Leaf Tobacco Development Company and its sister company, India Tobacco Company Ltd., recognise their obligations in the context of our developing economy. ITC collects and provides ILTD with valuable information on consumer preferences, both at home and abroad. ILTD, as the leaf tobacco supplier, particularly recognises its role as an agro-based company to encourage the farmer and to develop the cultivation of tobacco of the quality required.

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ideology, which according to his analysis earlier (p. 23) is only the contemporary rationalization of 'traditional Chinese 'Sageliness within and Kingliness without' fused with the communist requirements of 'redness and expertise' shall disintegrate.

Gupta bases his prognosis on what he alludes to as indications of how Chinese leaders are moving beyond simplistic solutions of Mao's strategy (p. 25) as well as his a priori assumption of what 'Modernisation of Traditional Society' necessarily entails or at least so Gupta thinks it does. These are the rise of a political technically trained personnel, detachment and intellectual prestige of such a non-committed professional elite, class-differentiation, and recognition of the autonomous function of culture and literature. (p. 25, column II.)

I do not wish to question his sources of information but, however, I must remind him that generalization on the basis of isolated indications, some of which may even be fluid and indecisive, can be often misleading.

But, to turn to Gupta's model of 'Modernisation of a Traditional Society' I want to put to his consideration the following points: (1) Why does Gupta think it necessary that for industrial production to be going apace one must have only an a-political technical elite? (2) What is the incompatibility (in hard terms) in being both ideologically committed and technically competent at the same time? Is not this a liberal prejudice that all committed technology is by definition second-rate. This is unwarranted by facts, such as Nazi technology or the present Zionist experiment in Israel; but the prejudice seems to continue. (3) Why must conspicuous consumption, profit incentives, and the consequent pauperisation of the masses and differentiation of classes along with the attendant culture reflecting these values, be a precondition of any industrial modernisation? (4) Is he conscious that if evidence of all known cases of industrial development have got the characteristics listed, it still cannot establish that no industrialisation can ever be without them. This lands him into a specific fallacy of the type 'All cases of X with Factors F1.F2.F3... so No Case of X without factors F1.F2.F3...', which any student of social-sciences would do well to avoid.

Without sounding censorious or even pedantic, I may point out in passing that Gupta falls victim to an implied self-contradiction while he recognises Maoist ideology to be a product of constraints: 'the concrete material conditions of China's

present development stage... surplus man-power, agrarian economy, widespread poverty, extensive illiteracy and paucity of trained personnel has seriously conditioned Mao's blue-print of change.' (p. 24.)

However, Gupta, only a few paragraphs after the above statement is made, seems to forget it totally and uncritically rants... 'his (Mao's) efforts to ruralise China, and proletarianise the Chinese, are bold romantic and absurd no less than Gandhi's...' (p. 25) One need hardly remind Gupta that if one judges a given blue-print to be plausible, even implicitly as he does, to say that it appreciates the factual context of the circumstances in which it is designed, one is no longer free to call it either 'romantic' or still worse 'absurd', as he does.

Now to turn to G. D. Deshingkar's note. He reviews (pp. 30-32) Chinese perceptions of the problems of its defence and security. He rests his major thesis on the fact that China's policy is primarily defensive in character on the information that the Chinese nuclear programme is geared to provide the ICBM system of delivery and costlier centrifuge technology that can be relevant only for strategic use at the level of super-power confrontation and not as an adjunct of tactical use in limited conventional wars. The information at our disposal is not adequately categorical so far as testing ICBM's launching systems are concerned, the recent tests across the Himalayas into the Indian ocean have not been fully analysed, so any inference based on these reports are little better than arm-chair analyses.

However, what any one can say is that the sort of parity in terror—both in terms of pre-emptive first strike capability or assured second strike deterrence (submarine launched MIRV nuclear-warheads) is not likely to be acquired at any rate by the Chinese policy-planners within the seventies, while either of the two super powers if not adequately conscious of unacceptable nuclear punishment from the other can plan and execute the total smashing of the entire Chinese nuclear programme. Deshingkar's note, otherwise quite competent, totally ignores this very obvious commonplace. I do not know why. Will he please explain?

So far as I can see, Chinese nuclear policy has its origins in the calculations of the political image that the Chinese have strived hard to secure as the leaders of the third world and, which, since 1964, they have made credible ever since they

became the only coloured power with some nuclear trigger to go by.

Deshingkar pleads for reconsideration of why China has such a huge People's Liberation Army and para-military formations without necessarily having bellicose policies of territorial conquest. His assessments about PLA's poor armour, little motorization, and inadequate haulage and logistic support, are based on recognised facts, and Chinese divisions are not capable of being mobilized at short notice owing to these factors as well as others regarding threat of subversions, serious compulsions of ruling regions with sullen majorities without their consent and, of course, factors of terrain. Nevertheless, Deshingkar's note is all too wrong for it does not adequately highlight the history of the various long-marches that the PLA has made and surmounted endless obstacles, the latest by the induction of a vast number of troops on mules, on foot, over hastily built road networks, railheads, and freshly laid air-strips in Tibet in the late fifties, that decimated Buddhist sub-culture, caused panic to us, their friends and champions, and provided PLA with a handle and leverage to meddle in the life of the relatively poor and famished masses of South-east Asia.

This great crusading PLA, one might ask Deshingkar, is bivouacking on the Tibetan Plateau against which super power, with its combat aircraft so menacingly perched on its neurotically designed airstrips far exceeding either the demands of civil aviation or even ordinary logistic support. I think it takes care of another red herring that Deshingkar opens inasmuch as he sees in China's non-development of inflight refuelling techniques for aircrafts, yet another evidence of Chinese pacifism.

As it is, China need not still retain the tactical whiphand, for the topography of the Indian sub-continent makes the whole of the Indo-Gangetic basin subject to serious air drubbing by any hostile force that is stationed on the Tibetan Plateau. This also debunks Deshingkar's plea that China is committed to fight for the enslaved people of the third world against every form of colonial and neo-colonial imperialism. Is it not time that Deshingkar explain why the PLA has neither joined battle in Taiwan, nor fought for the removal of the tiny colonial pimples on coastal China, or sent volunteers of the PLA to rescue either the PKI of the late Comrade DN Aidit of Indonesia. Or, why, as a wag puts it, the Chinese have declared that they shall fight Yankee Imperialism and its revanchist stooges in Tokyo,

Bangkok, Seoul and Saigon to the last Vietnamese and the first Chinese? I shall be glad to hear that Deshingkar squares these facts of the PLA's practice and its continued occupation of Tibet by what is upwards of ten divisions, with mountain artillery, light armour, mortars, rocket-launchers and a sizable number of combat aircraft? Couldn't they find oppressors and imperial super powers somewhere else to further the cause so near to the heart of self-appointed guardians of world-revolutions so as to idle away in grey winters the opportunity to roll back the Yankee domination in the far-East? Deshingkar's brief is a difficult one, and it would be interesting to see how he saves his client from an oft-repeated charge of working for the ideal of super-power domination in the East along with the USSR and USA in other continents.

I have already taken more space than I intended. Let me dismiss Deshingkar's subtle distinctions between 'Chinese military territorial conquest' on the one hand, and the 'propagation of revolutionary ideology' on the other, and his implied belief that the latter is not to be objected to only because of China's recent refusal to a '... Soviet invitation to join the exclusive nuclear club and declared that it would not participate in any great power conference behind the back of non-nuclear powers.

To such refined liberalism, I have really no answer. All I can do is to add that those who believe that all power comes from the barrel of a gun only find such faith and talk of commitments contemptible rituals which they have no qualms not to support as long as it is expedient. And, of course, to throw such squeamish 'ifs and buts' into the dustbin of history when 'objectively' conditions are dialectically ripe for their rejection. Deshingkar should know that these hard headed men have rarely respected anything or any interest unless they have perceived a credible risk of unacceptable punishment to themselves in the event of their adventures in the service of world-revolutions, or what you have, creating resistance from their victims. They are quick to include their yesterday's liberal champions in their revolutionary war as being members of reactionaries, class-enemies and running dogs of imperialism, a far from polite way of dealing, Deshingkar. I only wish, you were a bit less naive.

**Dharmendra Goel**

Philosophy Department, Punjab University,  
Chandigarh. 22-9-71

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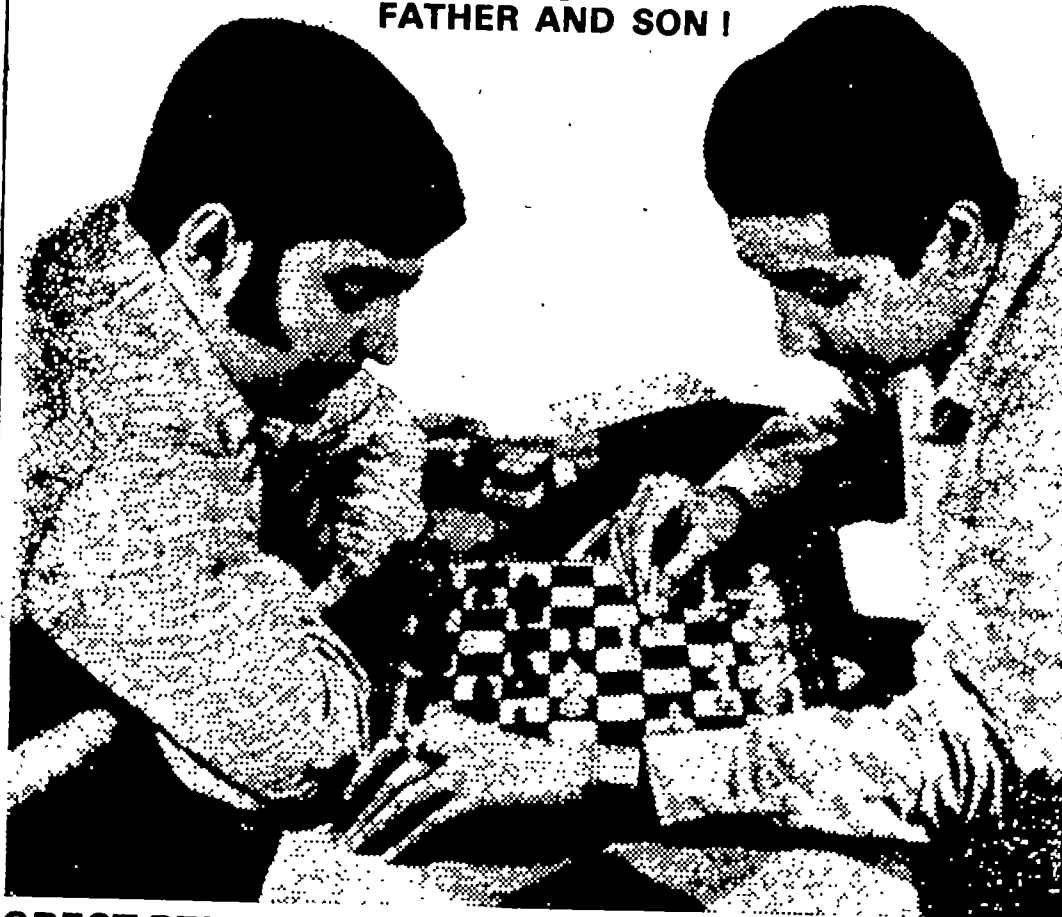
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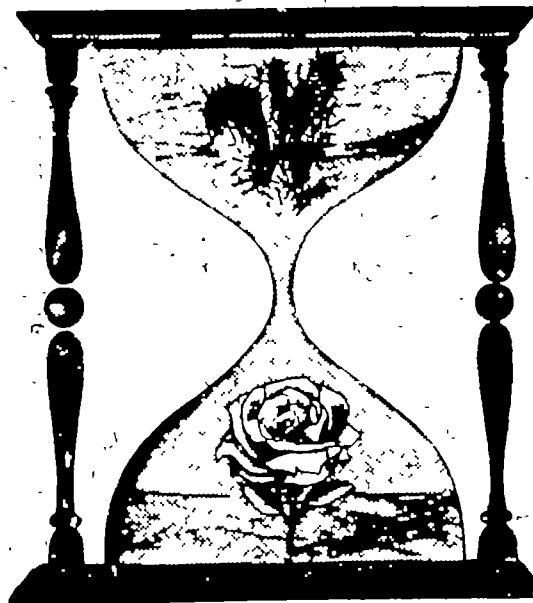
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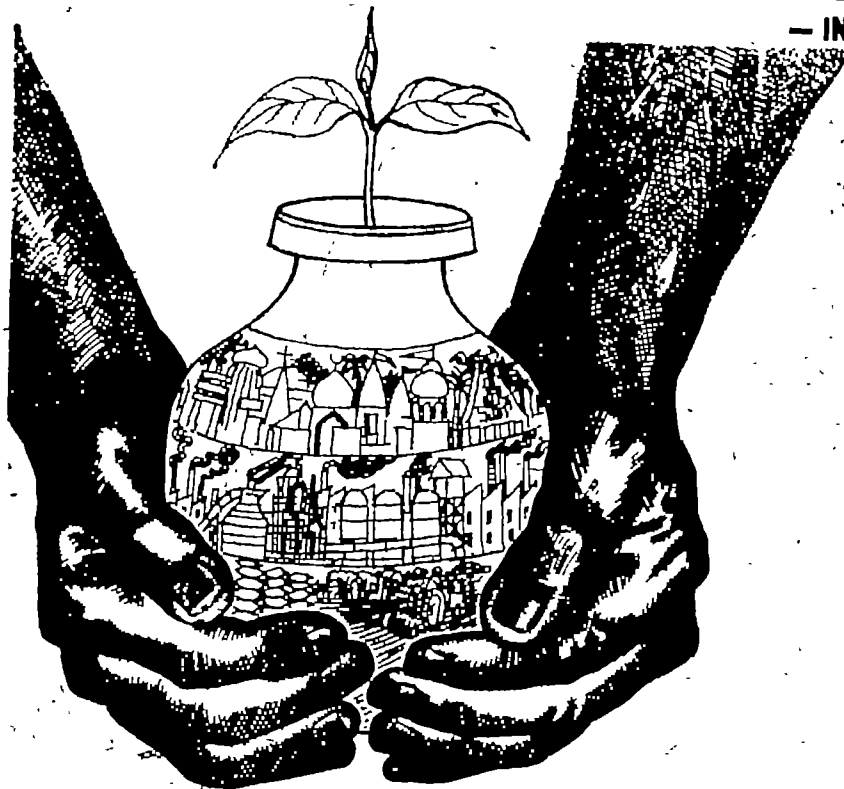
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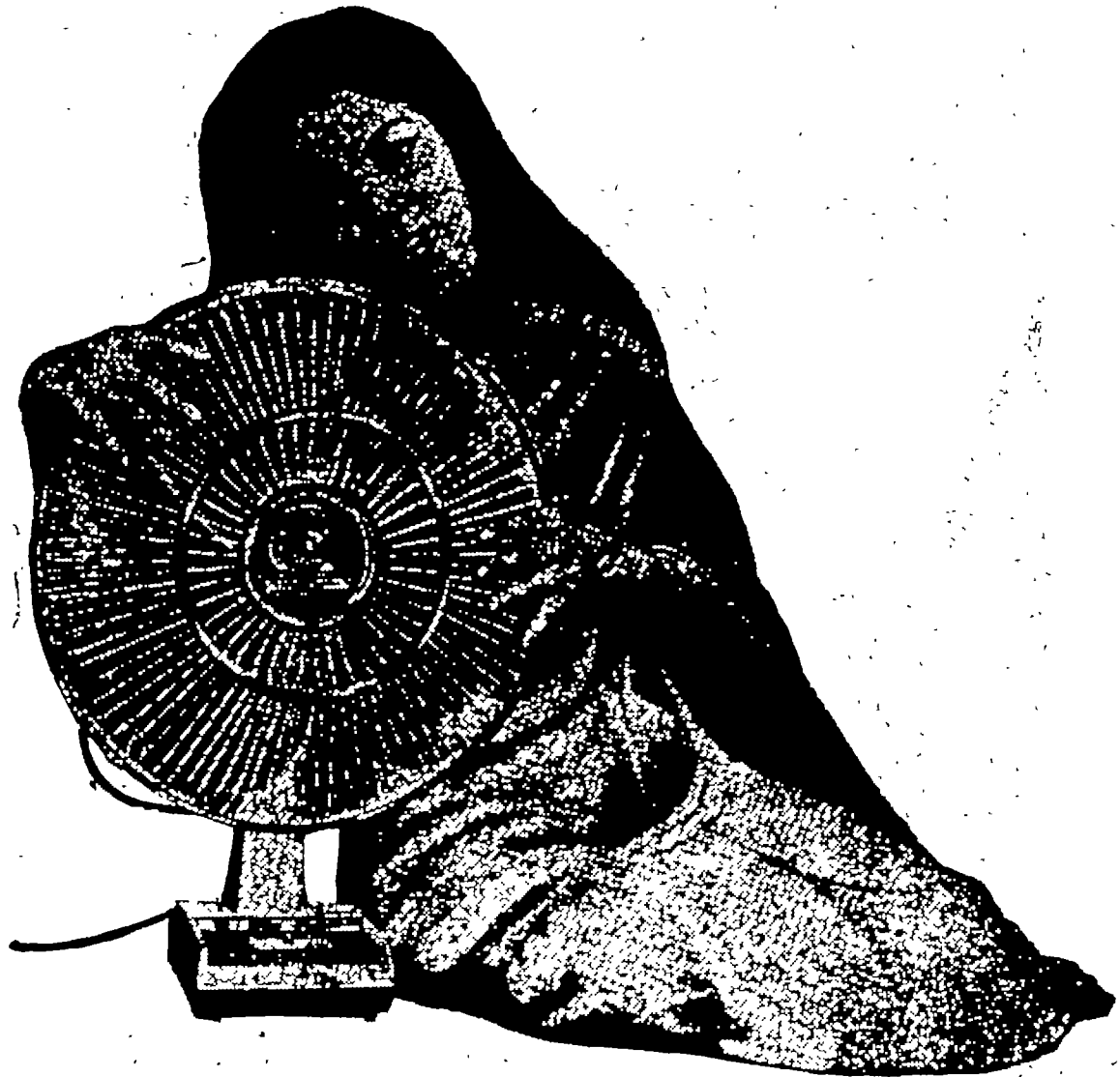
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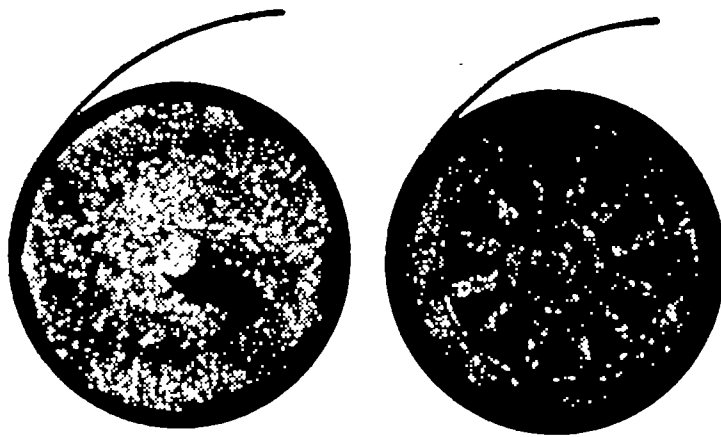


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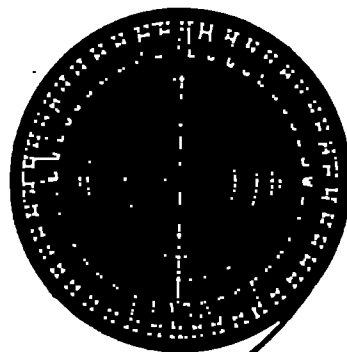
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